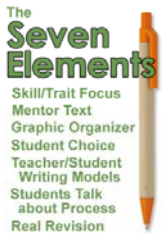


The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson




The Seven Elements
 Skill/Trait Focus
 Mentor Text
 Graphic Organizer
 Student Choice
 Teacher/Student Writing Models
 Students Talk about Process
 Real Revision

This is a goal-setting workshop for teachers and administrators interested in improving writing instruction through differentiation.

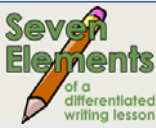
Corbett Harrison (<http://corbettharrison.com>)
 Northern Nevada Writing Project (<http://nnwp.org>)
 Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (<http://nwrpd.com>)
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Essential Questions: What's a realistic goal for you? How many of the seven elements could you focus on and still maintain quality instruction while learning?



•Fact: This workshop will focus on going into depth on seven, research-inspired strategies that can strengthen writing instruction when used effectively.
•Fact: Becoming better at effectively using any of the seven elements is not easy work. It requires diligence. It requires time. Learning will be enhanced by collaboration.
•Fact: Trying to improve on all seven simultaneously is an unrealistic goal. The "Seven Elements" are presented to you as a long-term professional development goal.
•Fact: Many of the "Seven Elements" complement each other; they can be learned about together.
•Fact: You will be asked to commit to studying one, two, or three of the seven as a professional goal during the next school year.


Essential Questions: What's a realistic goal for you? How many of the seven elements could you focus on and still maintain quality instruction while learning?



Let's liken this workshop's goal-setting process to realistic goals students might set with their own writing.

If there are Six Writing Traits...

- Idea Development
- Organization
- Voice
- Conventions
- Word Choice
- Sentence Fluency



This is Alfredo, a 5th grader. With writing skills, he's pretty competent but not one of your "superstars." Alfredo likes to write.

...how many (out of six) do you realistically think Alfredo could think about, improve upon, and still learn something about while revising?

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers


Essential Questions: What's a realistic goal for you?
How many of the seven elements could you focus on and still maintain quality instruction while learning?

Let's liken this workshop's goal-setting process to realistic goals students can set with their own writing.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

If there are Six Writing Traits...

- Idea Development
- Organization
- Voice
- Conventions
- Word Choice
- Sentence Fluency



This is Brooklyn, a 6th grader. With writing skills, she's gifted, but she'd rather read her independent novel than spend extra time revising.

...how many (out of six) do you realistically think Brooklyn could think about, make choices for, and still learn something about while drafting?


Essential Questions: What's a realistic goal for you?
How many of the seven elements could you focus on and still maintain quality instruction while learning?

Let's liken this workshop's goal-setting process to realistic goals students can set with their own writing.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

If there are Six Writing Traits...

- Idea Development
- Organization
- Voice
- Conventions
- Word Choice
- Sentence Fluency



This is Avery, an 8th grader. With writing, he really struggles and needs one-on-one time. He tries, but conventions frustrate him.

...how many (out of six) do you realistically think Avery could think about, make choices for, and still learn something about while pre-writing?

Essential Questions: What's a realistic goal for you?
How many of the seven elements could you focus on and still maintain quality instruction while learning?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

If there are...

The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision

...to choose from...

...and...

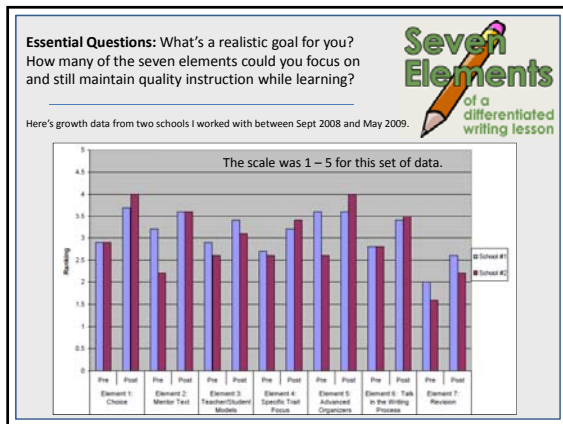


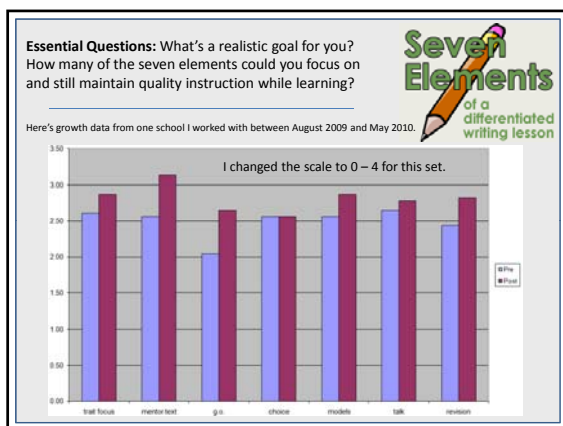
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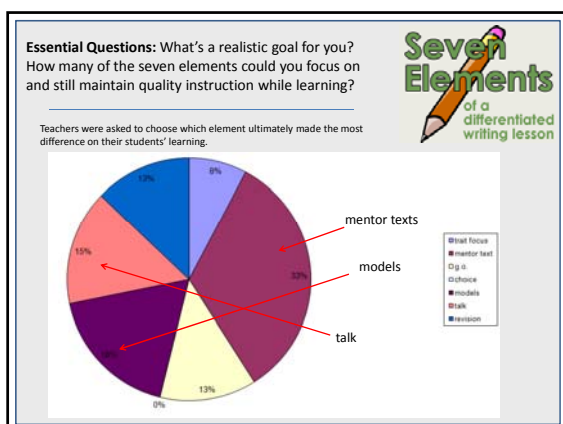
...you know you better than I know you...

...what goal will you set for yourself during this workshop?

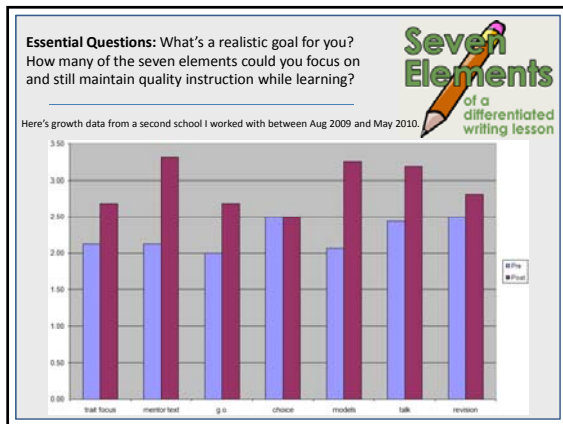
The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

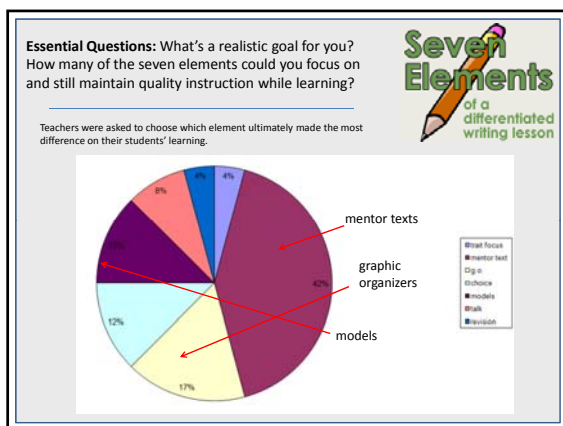


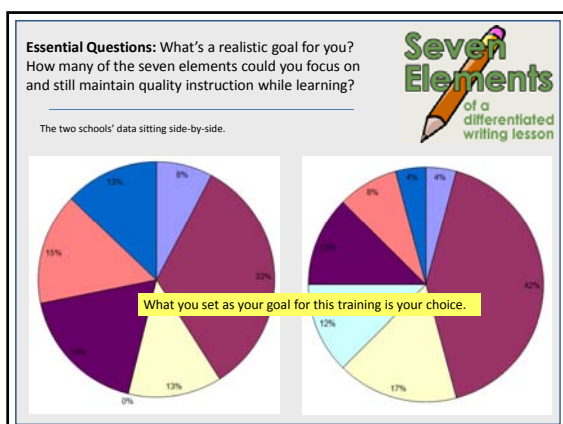




The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers







The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements
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 Mentor Text
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Mentor Texts:
One of the Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

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Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Mentor Text, a definition: a published piece of writing whose idea, whose structure, or whose written craft techniques can be discussed by student writers during a writing lesson for the purpose of inspiring them. I believe there are three types of these texts.

idea mentor texts	structure mentor texts	craft mentor texts
This mentor text's unique or interesting idea is used to inspire a fresh or unique idea from your student writers.	This mentor text provides a structure that student writers can "borrow" to write about their own unique ideas.	This mentor text contains well-crafted writing with techniques that can be discussed and imitated by student writers.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Here is my 1st example of an idea mentor text...

idea mentor texts
<p>This mentor text's unique or interesting idea is used to inspire a fresh or unique idea from your student writers.</p> <p>Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs is a fun story about the land of Chew-and-Swallow, where it rains different foods for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day. This is a unique idea that can be used to inspire original ideas!</p> <p>You might, for example, challenge your students to write about an original day in the land of Chew-and-Swallow, using foods that were not used in the original text. Or you might invent an original land where something <i>else</i> unusual rains from the sky.</p>

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson


Here is my 2nd example of an idea mentor text...

idea mentor texts

This mentor text's unique or interesting idea is used to inspire a fresh or unique idea from your student writers.

The most memorable chapter from *Homer Price* has to be the chapter about the automatic doughnut machine that goes a little haywire, making way too many doughnuts. An automatic food-making machine is a unique idea!

You could have your students create original written descriptions about automated machines that they wish they owned. You could even have kids draw and then "market" their original machines to each other!



Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson


Here is my 3rd example of an idea mentor text...

idea mentor texts

This mentor text's unique or interesting idea is used to inspire a fresh or unique idea from your student writers.

In chapter 3 of *Lord of the Flies*, two characters describe the same exact same setting (the unexplored jungle); one sees the jungle as a dangerous place; the other describes the jungle as a beautiful and mysterious place. Unique!

Students could think of a setting—a real one or an imaginary one—and then think of two characters who would feel different about the place. They could write about the same setting from two different perspectives, showing how differently the two see things.



Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

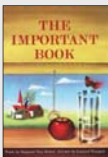
Here is my 1st example of an structure mentor text...

structure mentor texts

This mentor text provides a structure that student writers can "borrow" to write about their own unique ideas.

Margaret Wise Brown's *The Important Book* is probably the most widely used "structure mentor text." It provides a simple-to-follow pattern that is repeated on every page, each page exploring a different topic: wind, apples, etc.

Students can write "Important Book-inspired" passages about any topics of study—science, history, geography—or about more personal topics they have a connection to. The book's very safe structure can be used to write about any topic. If you don't know this book, ask a colleague.



The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?



Here is my 2nd example of an structure mentor text...

structure mentor texts

This mentor text provides a structure that student writers can "borrow" to write about their own unique ideas.

Stories like *Duck on a Bike* utilize storytellers' "series of three" pattern (remember Goldilocks?) In this story, a Duck rides a bike across the barnyard; 3 different animals each stop, observe, and make three different commentaries.

Students can use this story's pattern to create an original story about pretty much anything: something unusual can happen, and three different animals or characters all have a moment to react to it. Add an introduction and a conclusion, and you have a complete story!

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?



Here is my 3rd example of an structure mentor text...

structure mentor texts

This mentor text provides a structure that student writers can "borrow" to write about their own unique ideas.

Jim Croce's song, "I Gotta Name" has three different stanzas. Each song stanza focuses on a different thing the singer carries around with him as he walks down the "road of life." The three things are: a name, a song, and a dream.

Students can create original three-stanza poems about walking down "life's road." Each stanza of the poem can explore one important item the poet plans to carry with him/her as they "take on the world" when they become adults or independent.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

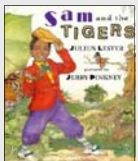
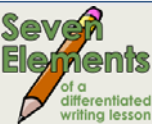
Here is my 1st example of an craft mentor text...

craft mentor texts

This mentor text contains well-crafted writing with techniques that can be discussed and imitated by student writers.

Julius Lester's *Sam and the Tigers* contains wonderful color similes, fresh and lively, not the forced similes our students sometimes write when we ask them to revise. Each piece of Sam's clothing is described with this type of simile.

Students can analyze and discuss what makes the similes in this book "fresh" and "not forced." They can then write something new (a color poem, perhaps) or revise a piece of writing, making sure to use fresh similes that Julius Lester would be proud to know he inspired from them.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson


Here is my 2nd example of an **craft** mentor text...

craft mentor texts

This mentor text contains well-crafted writing with techniques that can be discussed and imitated by student writers.

Anything by Patricia MacLachlan is just amazingly well-crafted. In *All the Places to Love*, one of the techniques used when describing her childhood home in the country is to begin her sentences with a variety of prepositions.

Students can analyze and discuss how beginning some sentences with prepositions (instead of using *I* and *the* all the time) can create a series of sentences that have more flow to them. Students can revise a setting description, changing just some of the sentences to begin this way.



Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson


Here is my 3rd example of an **craft** mentor text...

craft mentor texts

This mentor text contains well-crafted writing with techniques that can be discussed and imitated by student writers.

Ralph Fletcher's *Marshfield Dreams* is his autobiography. One style technique Fletcher is so skilled with is his use of subtle alliteration. His descriptions very subtly place verbs and adjectives together so the sounds play off one another.

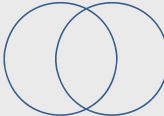
Students can analyze and discuss *any* of the short chapters from this book, looking for instances of subtle alliteration. They can then be prompted to look in their own writing for places where subtle alliteration would add to the writing, perhaps making it more fun to read aloud.



Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Extraordinary Writing vs Competent Writing



The Leaving Morning

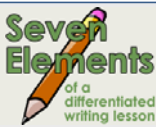
"The leaving happened on a soupy, misty morning when you could hear the street sweeper. Sssshhshsh... We pressed our faces against the hall window and left cold lips on the pane. It was the leaving morning. Boxes of clothes, toys, dishes, and pictures of us everywhere."


Moving Day

"It was moving day. Mr. and Mrs. Kim were moving. Jenny Kim was moving. Jack Kim was moving. But not Annie."

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?






A favorite lesson of mine is about to become better with a second mentor text only recently discovered...


"Homer got down from the chair and pushed a button on the machine marked, 'Start.' Rings of batter started dropping into the hot fat. After a ring of batter was cooked on one side an automatic gadget turned it over and the other side would cook. Then another automatic gadget gave the doughnut a little push and it rolled neatly down a little chute, all ready to eat."

Original Lesson:

- Focus Skill:** variety of meaningful transitions
- Revision Skill:** memorable details




•**Choice:** students first created a donut machine, then an original machine; for revision, they chose which piece they thought used transitions best.



A Doughnut Machine: The Donut O' Pounder
by Sydney, 8th grade writer

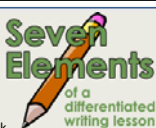
In the beginning, some moist sticky dough gets tossed into a giant white machine, also known as the "Donut O' Pounder." When the dough enters the machine, monstrous knuckles come down from the top of the machine and start pounding the dough at a fast pace. Afterwards, tiny, tiny blue jelly people arrive in their jelly mobiles and squirt yummy grape jelly into the fluffy circles of dough. Eventually, they wiggle into a dark chamber and white flakes of sugar fall from above and place a thin white layer of sugar on top of the dough. Finally, the moist, sticky dough is now cooked and soon takes a quick trip to "Stomach Road."




An Original Machine: Pizza Machine
by Noah, 8th grade writer

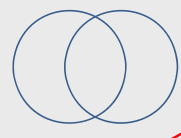
Everybody thinks that pizza is awesome, right? Well, I've created the Pizza Baking Machine 500. This is how it works. The first step in my machine's directions is to choose your crust thickness, the cheese choice and the toppings. Second, once you put the money in the slot, some dough squirts onto a conveyor belt and it gets squashed by a plate. The dough, then, is carried onto the thrower, which tosses the dough. Afterwards, the dough is put on an elevator and goes on a conveyor belt. Then it falls down a shaft to air the dough out. Finally, the dough slides on a conveyor belt to get "topped" with sauce, cheese and toppings. Meanwhile, another pizza is getting cooked on an auto elevator oven where it is raised on a belt. Last but not least, the pizza is put on a plate and lowered on a table. It is ready to eat!


Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?



Check out this machine passage from another book.








"A cascade of perfect movements, with hundreds of brilliantly calibrated actions, coursed through the mechanical man. The key tightened a spring connected to a series of gears that extended down into the base of the figure. There, the last gear turned a series of brass disks with precisely cut edges. Two little hammer-like contraptions came down and trailed along the edges of the notched disks, rising and falling as the disks steadily turned (pg. 240)." Thank you, author Brian Selznick!

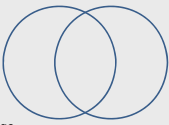
The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers


Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Two contrasting songs (they're mentor texts too!) on the same topic



John Mayer's
Waiting on the World to Change





Ben Harper's
With My Own Two Hands

Seven Elements of a differentiated writing lesson

"If we truly want to reach [students] and make connections, we have to meet them where they are and "link" our world as teachers to their world as millennial learners. I passionately believe that one of the places to look for that missing link is where today's technology meets music: the iPod. Skeptical? Pull out an iPod in class and watch the interest immediately appear on your students' faces. Put lyrics on the overhead and watch the focus in their eyes. Hit play and they are yours. Implement a well-designed lesson attached to that song and you can do magic..." Rob Stone


Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements of a differentiated writing lesson

Me and all my friends
we're all misunderstood
they say we stand for nothing and
there's no way we ever could
now we see everything that's going wrong
with the world and those who lead it
we just feel like we don't have the means
to rise above and beat it

So we keep waiting
waiting on the world to change
we keep on waiting
waiting on the world to change

It's hard to beat the system
when we're standing at a distance
so we keep waiting
waiting on the world to change...



I can change the world
With my own two hands
Make a better place
With my own two hands
Make a kinder place
Oh- with my
Oh- with my own two hands
With my own
Oh- with my own two hands
With my own
With my own two hands


I can make peace on earth
With my own two hands
And I can clean up the earth
Oh- with my own two hands
And I can reach out to you
Oh- with my own two hands
With my own
With my own two hands...

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements of a differentiated writing lesson

Uninvented Revolution
by Lauren, eleventh grade poet

You may be
one
in a million but it only takes
one
to revolutionize or blast into oblivion.
Either way, the sun will set and the day
is done.
What your weapon is, all depends
music, pen or voice
decades will come to an end
you can influence the future
with your choice.
In the big or small world,
impact varies by magnitude
your vision can make
something painted black
something painted blue.



You can balance us, land us, or break us.
Make life colorful or black and white.
The drive to expand turns to lust
the world will be frightened or blessed at night.
Emotions are drawn by music and
memories painted by words
determination fueling against every hit
you can sail your ship or submerge.
You may be
one
in a million but it only takes
one
to revolutionize or blast into oblivion.
Either way, the sun will set and the day
is done.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

My Own Two Hands
by Jadie, seventh grade poet

Two Hands
Changing the World?
Come on, what can two hands
Basically do to change the world?
Two hands are much more powerful
Than you think.
Beethoven's music...
Two hands.
The Mona Lisa painting,
Leonardo Da Vinci...
Two hands.
Each and every one of us can make a
Massive difference...
With our two hands.
Be the change.
Make a difference.

I Can Change the World...
by Liam, fourth grade poet




The world is passing by,
I see many sad things and
I ask "Why?"
Why must there be war
when there should be peace?
Drugs are everywhere
when minds should be clean.
Pollution and waste are all around.
The earth, it needs to breathe.
I can do my part.
I'll need your help.
That's a good start...
Let's change the world.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between an *idea* mentor text, a *structure* mentor text, and a *craft* mentor text? How can multiple mentor texts improve a writing lesson?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Discover WritingFix's Mentor Text of the Year Program

"Occasionally a great mentor text addresses a topic we're very fond of here at WritingFix: how to write like a real author. A mentor text that explores this important theme deserves to be brought out again and again (and again) during the same school year."

2008-2009 The Year of Revision	2009-2010 The Year of the Narrative	2010-2011 The Year of Writers' Notebooks
Roni Schotter's <i>Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street</i> .	Ralph Fletcher's <i>How to Write Your Life Story & Marshfield Dreams</i> .	Ralph Fletcher's <i>A Writer's Notebook</i> and Marissa Moss's <i>Amelia's Notebook</i> .
		

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision

Mentor Texts:
a personal goal for this element might have you...

- Begin to fill the gaps for developmentally appropriate writing skills that you currently don't have mentor texts to use that demonstrate those skills;
- Analyze your current use of mentor texts, making sure you make use all three types in writing lessons;
- Catalogue your mentor texts that can be used during pre-writing (idea inspirers) and during revision (craft inspirers);
- Discover a "Mentor Text of the Year" and use it all year long;
- Or...?

Samples from WritingFix's Homer Price-inspired Writing Lesson



A Doughnut Machine:

The Multi-Donut Restaurant

by Quinn, third grade writer

In the first step, the machine will pound and punch the uncooked dough into shape. This is followed by the dough falling into the oven to bake. After baking, a conveyor belt will take the dough to cool under two fans hovering over as they slide under the fans. Next, the doughnut will go to the "choosing bar" for people to choose what they want to eat. They can choose glaze, sugar, or sprinkles and flavor with one of those. Then, they choose filling or no filling. If they choose filling, they will choose the flavor

of the filling.



An Original Machine:

The "Robocrick" Maker

by Joseph, third grade writer

First of all, a small metal plate with two tabs is shaped into a tube by a metal claw; tab-side-in so the tabs touch at the end. Next, some small iron screws attach a shiny, metal dome to the tube. Now three fragile legs are attached to each side of the tube. Fourth, a rounded metal bar puts a tiny circuit board onto the tabs inside the tube. Then the circuit board is wired to two working eyes and an antenna on a metal head. Two working microphones go on the sides of the tube plus all the legs before the head is attached. To conclude, a jolt of electricity activates the completed "Robocrick."



A Doughnut Machine:

The Donut O' Pounder

by Sydney, fifth grade writer

In the beginning, some moist sticky dough gets tossed into a giant white machine, also known as the "Donut O' Pounder." When the dough enters the machine, monstrous knuckles come down from the top of the machine and start pounding the dough at a fast pace. Afterwards, tiny, tiny blue jelly people arrive in their jelly mobiles and squirt yummy grape jelly into the fluffy circles of dough. Eventually, they wiggle into a dark chamber and white flakes of sugar fall from above and place a thin white layer of sugar on top of the dough. Finally, the moist, sticky dough is now cooked and soon takes a quick trip to "Stomach Road."



An Original Machine:

Pizza Machine

by Noah, fifth grade writer

Everybody thinks that pizza is awesome, right? Well, I've created the Pizza Baking Machine 500. This is how it works. The first step in my machine's directions is to choose your crust thickness, the cheese choice and the toppings. Second, once you put the money in the slot, some dough squirts onto a conveyor belt and it gets squashed by a plate. The dough, then, is carried onto the thrower, which tosses the dough. Afterwards, the dough is put on an elevator and goes on a conveyor belt. Then it falls down a shaft to air the dough out. Finally, the dough slides on a conveyor belt to get "topped" with sauce, cheese and toppings. Meanwhile, another pizza is getting cooked on an auto elevator oven where it is raised on a belt. Last but not least, the pizza is put on a plate and lowered on a table. It is ready to eat!

Samples from WritingFix's *With my Own Two Hands*-inspired Poetry Lesson

Uninvented Revolution

by Lauren, eleventh grade writer

You may be
one
in a million but it only takes
one
to revolutionize or blast into oblivion.
Either way, the sun will set and the day
is done.



What your weapon is, all depends
music, pen or voice
decades will come to an end
you can influence the future
with your choice.

In the big or small world,
impact varies by magnitude
your vision can make
something painted black
something painted blue.

You can balance us, land us, or break us. Make life
colorful or black and white. The drive to expand turns
to lust
the world will be frightened or blessed at night.

Emotions are drawn by music and memories painted
by words determination fueling against every hit you
can sail your ship or submerge.

You may be
one
in a million but it only takes
one
to revolutionize or blast into oblivion. Either way, the
sun will set and the day is done.

I Can Change the World...

by Liam, fourth grade poet

The world is passing by,
I see many sad things and
I ask "Why?"

Why must there be war
when there should be peace?

Drugs are everywhere
when minds should be clean.

Pollution and waste are all around.
The earth, it needs to breathe.

I can do my part.
I'll need your help.
That's a good start...

Let's change the world.



My Own Two Hands

by Jadie, seventh grade poet

Two Hands
Changing the World?
Come on, what can two hands
Basically do to change the world?
Two hands are much more powerful
Than you think.
Beethoven's music...
Two hands.
The Mona Lisa painting,
Leonardo Da Vinci...
Two hands.
Each and every one of us can make a
Massive difference...
With our two hands.
Be the change.
Make A Difference.



The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson


The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision


Skill/Trait Focus:
One of the Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

Corbett Harrison (<http://corbettharrison.com>)
 Northern Nevada Writing Project (<http://nnwp.org>)
 Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (<http://nwrpd.com>)
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Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?




My homepage:
<http://corbettharrison.com>



Writing needs to be taught as a collection of skills that work together to create a thoughtful holistic idea or statement; most of the writing instruction I observe, however, focuses on the assignment of a format or a product with only a secondary emphasis (if that) on learning skills of writing.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?




Because *Writing Matters*, published by the National Writing Project and Carl Nagin, focuses on research about the difference between assigning writing and teaching writing as a process.

Writing is Simply Assigned:	Writing is Explicitly Taught as a Process:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Writing assignments are mostly formulaic. •Students are required to write without much forethought. •Students are criticized for not making a purpose clear, for organizing illogically, or not developing ideas. •Students are not aware of significant improvement in their own writing. •Students sometimes re-write, but the re-writing focuses on correcting grammar, usage, and so on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students are taught to stray from formula. •Students are taught to brainstorm through thinking, talking, and free-writing, etc. •Assignments are designed with explicit steps to teach purpose, organization, and idea development through inquiry. •Students reflect on growth (or lack thereof) with specific writing skills. •Students are encouraged to revise, focusing on skills other than those in the conventions trait.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?




Vicki Spandel's *The 9 Rights of Every Writer* is a guide for teachers that helps them explore a philosophical rationale for using extra class-time to teach the writing process *really* well.

Her "8th Right" is called "The Right to Go beyond Formula."


"The most important reason to avoid formula—indeed run from it as fast as our feet will carry us—is that it stifles thinking."
--Vicki Spandel

"In attempting to take the mystery away from writing and make it more accessible, the formulaic approach winds up hindering students from exploring their ideas, reactions, and interpretations—the rich chaotic mess from which true insight and thoughtfulness can emerge."
--Mark Wiley




Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*? What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*?




Donald H. Graves has been involved in writing research for two decades. His books *Writing: Teachers & Children at Work* (Heinemann, 1983) and *A Fresh Look at Writing* (Heinemann, 1994) are best-sellers throughout the English-speaking world and have revolutionized the way writing is taught in schools.

"The writing process is anything a writer does from the time the idea came until the piece is completed or abandoned. There is no particular order. So it's not effective to teach writing process in a lock-step, rigid manner. What a good writing teacher does is help students see where writing comes from: in a chance remark or an article that really burns you up. I still hold by my original statement: if kids don't write more than three days a week, they're dead, and it's very hard to become a writer. If you provide frequent occasions for writing, then the students start to think about writing when they're not doing it. I call it a state of constant composition."
--Donald H. Graves



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?




In 2004, the NNWP asked...

How well do teachers know their writing skills?
(not the traits, which are collections of many skills, but the specific skills themselves...)

The NNWP brought together a team of teachers to build a resource that explored the many skills that made-up each of the six writing traits.

In 2005, we finalized the 196-page resource—*The Going Deep with 6 Trait Language Guide*—which broke the traits into many skills. Let's take a few minutes to explore the organization of this resource.

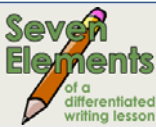
On pages 13, 49, 83, 121, 147, and 179 of the guide, you will find the NNWP's working list of sub-skills for each trait. Which from each list are developmentally appropriate for your grade level, and of those, which do currently wish you had better instruction for?



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

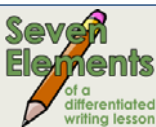
Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?



Instruction starts to *sound* different...

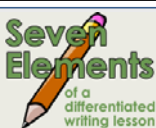
Focusing instruction on a PRODUCT sounds like:	Focusing instruction on a SPECIFIC SKILL sounds like:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“We’re all going to write a book report.” •“You need to learn to write compare & contrast essays for high school.” •“You all get to write a report on a president of your choice. Your report will contain two pages of writing based on research and two original illustrations.” •“We’re have to learn to write constructed responses for the upcoming CRT tests.” •“Your acrostic poem will be about spring and we’re going to decorate them to hand in the hallways.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“You’ve all been using details in your writing, and now I want you to learn to <i>balance general details with more specific and memorable details</i>.” •“We noticed yesterday that Ralph Fletcher uses <i>hints of subtle alliteration</i> in his writing, and today we’re going to practice that in our own writing.” •“Real authors don’t begin all their sentences with the same three or four words all the time. Today you’re going to try <i>varying your sentence beginnings</i>.”

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?



<p>Focusing instruction on a PRODUCT sounds like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“We’re all going to write a book report.” •“You need to learn to write compare & contrast essays for high school.” •“You all get to write a report on a president of your choice. Your report will contain two pages of writing based on research and two original illustrations.” •“We’re have to learn to write constructed responses for the upcoming CRT tests.” •“Your acrostic poem will be about spring and we’re going to decorate them to hang in the hallways.” 	<p>It makes sense that a teacher would aim instruction at teaching a formula when product is their focus.</p> <p>Formula writing (more often than not) leads to writing the student doesn’t care about.</p> <p>It’s easy for students to end up with an unclear purpose, illogical organization, and an under-developed idea when their own writing doesn’t interest them.</p> <p>Revision (a.k.a. critical thinking) can only be superficial (at best) when this occurs in our classrooms.</p>
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Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?



<p>Focusing instruction on a SPECIFIC SKILL sounds like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“You’ve all been using details in your writing, and now I want you to learn to <i>balance general details with more specific and memorable details</i>.” •“We noticed yesterday that Ralph Fletcher uses lots of <i>subtle alliteration</i> in his writing, and today we’re going to practice that in our own writing.” •“Real authors don’t begin all their sentences with the same three or four words all the time. Today you’re going to try <i>varying your sentence beginnings</i>.” 	<p>Planning for skill-focused writing instruction changes things up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Should you have a mentor text that demonstrates that skill to students? •Does your graphic organizer help all students prepare to apply the skill? •When you model, will you model differently, knowing you should be modeling a skill, not simply a product? •Can you direct students to talk about that skill when they look at student models of the writing? •Will revision come easier to students when they have a skill to focus on?
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The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Determine a "Focus skill" and a "Support skill": a tool for differentiation

Differentiating instruction means acknowledging when you are "teaching to the middle," and purposely finding ways to simultaneously support those students who will struggle with the topic while challenging those students who will learn the topic with more ease than your average learners.

When we talk about graphic/advanced organizers and modeling, we will be thinking about the students who will definitely need that extra support from you.

By pre-determining a "support skill" (or two) for your lesson, a teacher will be ready to challenge those students who are understanding the focus skill earlier than the rest. The teacher can quietly challenge those students to analyze (and do some early revising) for the support skill(s) while the rest of the students continue to work diligently with the focus skill. I personally find it helpful to choose a support skill that I can also show the students in the mentor text we're using.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Determine a "Focus skill" and a "Support skill": a tool for differentiation

	Focus Skill:	Support Skill:	
All students work on this during rough draft writing.	Adding mood or tone to a piece of writing (voice)	Using figurative language that complements mood or tone (word choice)	Advanced writers can also work on this while rough drafting.
Extra support for struggling writers has been created.			Average writers might be challenged with this during revision.

By pre-determining a "support skill" (or two) for your lesson, a teacher will be ready to challenge those students who are understanding the focus skill earlier than the rest. The teacher can quietly challenge those students to analyze (and do some early revising) for the support skill(s) while the rest of the students continue to work diligently with the focus skill. I personally find it helpful to choose a support skill that I can also show the students in the mentor text we're using.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *teaching writing as a process* and *teaching it as a product*? What's the difference between *teaching writing* and *assigning writing*?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Determine a "Focus skill" and a "Support skill": a tool for differentiation

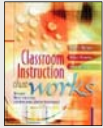
I also find it helpful to choose focus and support skills from writing traits that naturally complement each other:

Idea Development & Organization	Voice & Word Choice	Sentence Fluency & Conventions

By pre-determining a "support skill" (or two) for your lesson, a teacher will be ready to challenge those students who are understanding the focus skill earlier than the rest. The teacher can quietly challenge those students to analyze (and do some early revising) for the support skill(s) while the rest of the students continue to work diligently with the focus skill. I personally find it helpful to choose a support skill that I can also show the students in the mentor text we're using.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between teaching writing as a process and teaching it as a product? What's the difference between teaching writing and assigning writing?



One last piece of research with this element: Robert Marzano's *Classroom Instruction that Works*. Marzano, after synthesizing tons of educational research, created a list of the nine classroom strategies that increased students' achievement on standardized tests the most significantly.

One of the nine strategies is *engaging students in a lesson's objective and keeping them engaged with it*.

Product-based Objective:

The student will write a polished book report.

Skill-based Objective:

The student will use details that are appropriate to the purpose of a piece of writing.

I find it easier to engage students in objectives that are "life skills" than objectives that are "school-only skills." All research about the millennial generation says they want school to be personally relevant.

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision

Skill/Trait Focus:
a personal goal for this element might have you...

- Begin to fill the gaps for developmentally appropriate skills that you currently don't have solid instruction for;
- Try designing lessons with both a focus skill (for all) and a support skill (for faster learners);
- Design advanced organizers that are skill-specific (for all learners but especially for struggling learners);
- Create new teacher models (rough drafts and final drafts) for required genres or formats that demonstrate specific skills in action;
- Design tools or strategies that help your students look for skills in their own or each other's writing;
- Or...?

welcome...

(<http://corbettharrison.com>)

"We write to prove that we think." So read the sign I hung above my classroom door on the day I became the writing teacher I had set out to become. It took me many years of hard work to believe I had finally learned enough to make that sign and use its words as my classroom motto. Those years of hard work remain the best investment I've ever made for my teaching career.

Before that sign existed, I very much struggled with the teaching of writing. Using the formulaic structures known by most teachers, I could *assign* my students and get them to *produce* writing, but writing was a task most of my kids strongly disliked because it felt pointless and rote to them. Their book reports, five-paragraph essays, hamburger paragraphs, and diamante poems were spell-checked and edited, but the written ideas showed a depth of understanding that was hardly deep. I remember spending entire weekends grading less-than-stellar portfolio samples from my kids and wondering what I was doing wrong. It became apparent that *assigning* writing was fairly easy, but *teaching* it was a much harder task. Not one teacher-preparation course from my past had given me the ability to really *teach* writing.

I needed to discover how writing could be used as both a processing and critical thinking tool. In 1996, after five years of struggling with writing, I joined an amazing teaching organization that completely changed my career. The **Northern Nevada Writing Project** helped me discover techniques to teach writing in a more meaningful way; even better, they challenged me to step outside the comfort of my classroom's walls and present my new learning to fellow Nevada teachers. Working alongside other NNWP teachers on collaborative projects and demonstration lessons, I learned strategies and analyzed philosophies that were unlike anything I'd learned in college. I became a writing teacher *and* a teacher trainer in 1996. I remain very proud of both of these roles.

In 2001, the NNWP challenged me to take on a third role: webmaster. I built a resource website for the Northern Nevada Writing Project where innovative ideas from writing teachers all over Nevada were posted. Our **WritingFix** website, now almost a decade old, features lessons, resources, and entire teacher workshops for any teacher who struggles with the difference between *teaching* writing and *assigning* writing. Student samples and complete lessons are now sent to us by teachers from all over the world on a daily basis. I'm proud to be the educator who created and maintains this website that freely gives away so many great ideas.

I invite you to explore this personal website, which I launched six years after launching WritingFix. Here, you can link to my best original lessons, as well as favorite lessons from fellow teachers. Here, you can learn what workshops for teachers I am currently offering in Nevada, and you can find out how to bring me to your state or district. Here, you can--perhaps--discover something that motivates you to become an even better writing teacher. I am glad you are here. If you learn anything as a result of your visit, I hope you'll consider sharing it with me.

My Personal Philosophies on Teaching Writing:

Writing needs to be taught as a collection of skills that work together to create a thoughtful holistic idea or statement; most of the writing instruction I observe, instead, focuses on the assignment of a format or a final product with only a secondary emphasis on learning skills of writing.

When assessing student writing, the writing process--as well as the final product--should receive consideration.

Writing instruction must happen in every curriculum area, not just in language arts. And *assigning* writing is not enough; all teachers must be able to *teach* some skills of writing to their students.

Students must see their teachers write too.

Revision is the most powerful--as well as the most neglected--step of the writing process; students who know how to authentically revise learn critical thinking skills for both writing and for life.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

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The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
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- Real Revision

Graphic/Advance Organizers:
One of the Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

Corbett Harrison (<http://corbettharrison.com>)
Northern Nevada Writing Project (<http://nnwp.org>)
Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (<http://nwrpd.com>)
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Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?

A good piece of research for this element: Robert Marzano's *Classroom Instruction that Works*. Marzano, after synthesizing tons of educational research, created a list of the nine classroom strategies that increased students' achievement on standardized tests the most significantly.

One of the nine strategies is *using an advance organizer*.

"Advance organizers should focus on essential information, especially when unusual or bizarre aspects of the topic might distract students. Advance organizers can, of course, help students get ready to learn facts and details about a topic, but you can use advance organizers more effectively if you help students get ready to use the information."
--Robert Marzano

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A best graphic organizer should ask the writer to do two things:

Brainstorm +

My Persuasive Essay:

Introduction:

My best argument:

My second argument:

My third best argument:

Conclusion:

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?

A great question that may occur to you:

How do you include this → → → → → → → → → → and not end up with formulaic writing?

Her "8th Right" is called "The Right to Go **beyond** Formula."

"The most important reason to avoid formula—indeed run from it as fast as our feet will carry us—is that it stifles thinking."

—Vicki Spandel

My Persuasive Essay:

Introduction:

My best argument:

My second best argument:

My third best argument:

Conclusion:

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?

Hamburger Paragraph Visual Template for Students

Start by thinking for your topic sentence and strong opening sentence.

The hamburger that comes next are your details. Think of the layers of the burger. The meat, tomatoes, lettuce, etc.

Holding it all together is the bottom bun. It should be an interesting conclusion sentence.

Combining these directions with an actual place to write the individual sentences will most likely yield pretty formulaic writing.

Compare this G.O. with the next three or four that we look over.

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?

A book recommendation for teachers struggling with formulaic writing:

Reviving the Essay: How to Teach Structure without Formula by Gretchen Bernabei

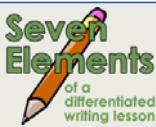
Prompt: Write about a time something happened that changed a belief you had once held. Explain how the event or occurrence caused your mind to change.


I used to believe... → But then [blank] happened... → Now I believe...

Teach structure, not formula!


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Dogzilla
by Dav Pilkey



Mansquito, a definite B-movie

A fun story-writing lesson inspired by Reviving the Essay.

Prompt: Tell the story of a scientific mishap that turns a scientist into a half-person/half-animal creature.

Story introduction...

Describe the accident that occurs.

→

Describe the transformation of the main character.

→

Describe the main character discovering the transformation.


Story conclusion.

Womingo
by Kyle, seventh grade writer

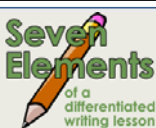
We were all pouring and mixing chemicals and fixing up machines when Professor Lixten dropped a beaker on the ground. All of the bluish, clear liquid that it contained was lost and spilled on the linoleum tile. At the same time, Professor Hyken was crossing the lab with two beakers of the solution that caused a chemical reaction that joined things together.

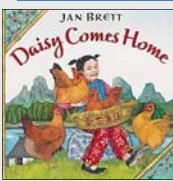
Professor Hyken slipped on the bluish, clear liquid, and went tumbling to the floor, releasing her beakers containing the solution. They flew through the air and hit Professor Whitney Pafferton. Professor Pafferton began running and screaming as the fluids from the beakers swamped over her like it was raining thick, sweaty water. She ran around the room like there was a monster chasing her and ripping at her ankles. She screamed as if trying to wake the dead from their graves. Then she smacked Professor Hickman's ladder, and he fell down as he tried to reach something to break his fall. He grabbed a light bulb hanging from the ceiling, and he pulled it out of the socket as he fell to the floor. The ladder crashed down and hit the test animals' cages and opened them. All the animals escaped, including the flamingo. Professor Pafferton kept running around until she tripped, falling into the flamingo. They fell to the ground, and they were both knocked unconscious. Together they formed WOMINGO.

Professor Pafferton woke up twenty minutes later, and she saw the room trashed with broken light bulbs and broken beakers on the floor. There were fluids on the floor. She saw Professor Hyken cowering under a desk. Professor Pafferton stood up and walked over to the mess of spilled chemicals on the floor. She heard a clack, clack—like hard nails on the ground—as she walked. She looked at her feet, and she realized they were pink and scaly. Then she looked at her arms. There were little feathers sprouting out of her skin! The professor looked down at a puddle of chemicals and saw a beak growing where her mouth once was. She yelled, "No, I am a monster!"



Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?





Daisy Comes Home
by Jan Brett

Lesson Title: Floating Down a River

Lesson author: Karen Suga, primary teacher (NNWP)

Overview: Students develop skills with *pacing* while planning a story about floating down a river and encountering three animals on the journey.

Focus Skill: Pacing (organization)

Support Skill: Memorable details (idea development)

Mentor Text: Daisy Comes Home by Jan Brett

Graphic Organizer #1: Brainstorms details

Graphic Organizer #2: Organizes details with pacing

Student Models: Grades 2-4, 6, 8, 11


Choice: Students can choose different rivers to float down and different animals to encounter

Talk: While analyzing student models, filling out graphic organizer, revising with the post-its.

Revision: Organization & Idea Development Post-its

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?




The *Daisy Comes Home* lesson at WritingFix is both popular and a great example of all seven elements working together in a single lesson.

Using the mentor text: Read the whole story aloud a day before beginning the writing lesson. It is the story of a chicken who, when kicked out of the henhouse by bullies, sleeps in a basket that ends up floating down a river. Daisy encounters adventures along the river that give her the strength to stand up to the bullies when she finally returns home after the adventure.

Focus skill in the mentor text: On the day the writing lesson begins, point out the three animals she encounters in the middle of her adventure. Have students notice that each "animal adventure" is more or less the same length and includes a fairly equal amount of details. Tell students this is called "pacing" in writing, and it needs to be pre-planned before writing a rough draft.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

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The *Daisy Comes Home* lesson at WritingFix is both popular and a great example of all seven elements working together in a single lesson.


Talking about the student samples before writing: Have students discuss several student examples. Ask them to list three or four skills they think each writer showed more skills with than others.

List several skills of organization on the board (strong intro, satisfying conclusion, meaningful transition words, easy-to-follow sequence of events/ideas, pacing).

Have students look at one example one more time, this time looking specifically for skills of organization the student writer excelled with.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?



In the Rain Forest
by Austin, 3rd grade writer

I'm climbing into the mouth of the *Amazon River* when I meet 3 fascinating animals. I am caught in rapids, seeing lazy fish, round rocks and a sunken raft. I smell the bitter smell of oil and rotten seaweed. I taste salt water. Read more.

When I am floating down the river, I see a branch with a boa constrictor squeezing a mouse to its death. It comes closer to me and is looking as evil as it can. When I float under the boa, my teeth chatter from fear.

The next thing I see is a tiger shark just swallowing the remains of a clownfish. He is coming nearer and nearer, looking very hungry. Then a fin pops out of the water.

When I swim past the shark, I see an *okapi*. It's coming nearer with fascination. When it's real close to the water, it eats some grass. I reach out and pet it.

I need to get out now. When I get out, I'm in the rainforest and thinking about how exciting the adventure was.

Click [here](#) to see different examples from different grade levels online.

To help students begin noticing the *pacing*, ask them to count the number of sentences in story's paragraphs or parts.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

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Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Click [here](#) to see this graphic organizer online.

Notice how explicit the instructions are. This graphic organizer is designed to help *all* writers begin to build a story.

Notice how Austin filled his brainstorm out, not worrying about conventions (*ratbeds* means *rapids*, by the way!). Student models don't always have to be completed stories; a graphic organizer that has been filled out well makes a great student model to show your students too. Start saving your kids' thoughtful and completed graphic organizers.

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?

Shaping Ideas Graphic Organizer

Click [here](#) to see this graphic organizer online.

Notice again how explicit the instructions are. Where is the student explicitly told to begin shaping a well-paced story?

When a graphic organizer is designed to teach students a very specific skill based on one of the traits, they tend to look a lot different than a circle with six bubbles coming off of it!

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?

The revision post-its are a powerful tool for helping students *talk* to each other during response time as well as helping them make choices when it comes to revision (pages ___ of the "Seven Elements" Packet).

Revision: Most of the lessons at WritingFix make use of the site's Revision Post-Its as their tool for helping students re-envision their stories.

Rank or Rate? When students *rate* with the post-its, they can assign skills the same number. When students *rank* with the post-its, they can only have one 1, one 2, etc. I personally find ranking a better verb for this task, as it makes the students think harder.

Organization:


- My introduction grabs the reader's attention.
- My conclusion links back to my introduction.
- I used transitions words to move from idea to idea.
- My paragraphs show where my sub-topics begin & end.
- My title stands for my entire draft, not just a part of it.

Idea Development:

- I used a balance of showing and telling.
- My details try to paint a picture in the reader's head.
- I took a unique approach when writing about this topic.
- I stayed on topic throughout the entire writing.
- My theme/message is clear to my reader.


The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?



The Daisy Comes Home lesson at WritingFix is both popular and a great examples of all seven elements working together in a single lesson.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson



Reflect on this entire lesson with a partner. Other than the graphic organizer, talk about which of the seven elements really stand out the strongest? What new idea about lesson-design have you gained?


Focus Skill: Pacing (organization)
Support Skill: Memorable details (idea development)
Mentor Text: *Daisy Comes Home* by Jan Brett
Graphic Organizer #1: Brainstorms details
Graphic Organizer #2: Organizes details with pacing
Student Models: Grades 2-4, 6, 8, 11
Choice: Students can choose different rivers to float down and different animals to encounter
Talk: While analyzing student models, filling out graphic organizer, revising with the post-its.
Revision: Organization & Idea Development Post-its

Essential Questions: How can we design graphic organizers that allow for both *brainstorming* and *initial shaping of ideas*? How does choosing a focus skill/trait beforehand inspire us to rethink our G.O.'s?


Planning a graphic organizer that is skill-specific:

Specific Skills to choose from for a partner task:		
Putting learned information into your own words.	Adding tone (attitude about topic) to your writing.	Using alliteration subtly in your draft.
Including both simple and complex sentences in your writing.	Work with a partner and create two rough drafts of ideas for graphic organizers that would address two of these writing skills.	Using a variety of transition words when moving from an idea to another idea.
Adding mood (emotion) to your writing.	Using action words to enhance your written descriptions.	Varying sentence beginnings in your writing

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson



The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson



The Seven Elements
Skill/Trait Focus
Mentor Text
Graphic Organizer
Student Choice
Teacher/Student Writing Models
Students Talk about Process
Real Revision

Graphic/Advance Organizers:
a personal goal for this element might have you...

- Design graphic organizers for those developmentally appropriate writing skills that you currently don't have solid instruction for;
- Explore how to provide students with a basic structure, but teach them to go beyond formula when they actually draft and revise;
- Improve your Microsoft Word skills to design graphic organizers that are visually stunning;
- Teach students to design their own graphic organizers after they've heard the purpose of the writing assignment;
- Or...?

Student Samples from the Dogzilla-inspired lesson

Robot Lizard

by Christopher, third grade writer

One day in my lab, I was working on an antidote gun. Instead of grabbing the antidote, I grabbed the lizard DNA and put it in the gun. I checked if it caused effects, then I gave myself a shot and felt very strange. Next, metal attached itself to my body. I saw I was turning into a robot lizard. When my eyes changed, I blacked out.

After my transformation was complete, I woke up feeling powerful. When the janitor came into the lab, he was looking at me. He was so scared he got on the phone and called 911. The police came and started shooting at me. With lightning speed, I avoided the bullets. After that, I broke their guns and patrol cars and escaped.

After I escaped, a skyscraper was in my way. With one jump, I leaped over the building and landed on my feet. When running in the city, I saw a helicopter land in my way. Out came Captain America, Iron Man, Thor, Spiderman, and the Black Panther. I fought them by using my claws, but I was no match for them. They defeated me and I blacked out.



Womingo

by Kyle, seventh grade writer

We were all pouring and mixing chemicals and fixing up machines when Professor Lixten dropped a beaker on the ground. All of the bluish, clear liquid that it contained was lost and spilled on the linoleum tile. At the same time, Professor Hyken was crossing the lab with two beakers of the solution that caused a chemical reaction that joined things together.

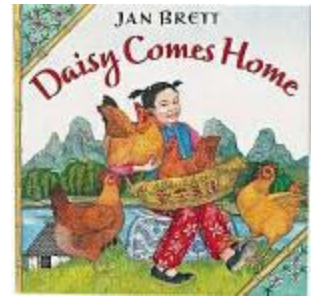
Professor Hyken slipped on the bluish, clear liquid, and went tumbling to the floor, releasing her beakers containing the solution. They flew through the air and hit Professor Whitney Pafferton. Professor Pafferton began running and screaming as the fluids from the beakers swamped over her like it was raining thick, sweaty water. She ran around the room like there was a monster chasing her and ripping at her ankles. She screamed as if trying to wake the dead from their graves. Then she smacked Professor Hickman's ladder, and he fell down as he tried to reach something to break his fall. He grabbed a light bulb hanging from the ceiling, and he pulled it out of the socket as he fell to the floor. The ladder crashed down and hit the test animals' cages and opened them. All the animals escaped, including the flamingo. Professor Pafferton kept running around until she tripped, falling into the flamingo. They fell to the ground, and they were both knocked unconscious. Together they formed WOMINGO.

Professor Pafferton woke up twenty minutes later, and she saw the room trashed with broken light bulbs and broken beakers on the floor. There were fluids on the floor. She saw Professor Hyken cowering under a desk. Professor Pafferton stood up and walked over to the mess of spilled chemicals on the floor. She heard a clack, clack—like hard nails on the ground—as she walked. She looked at her feet, and she realized they were pink and scaly. Then she looked at her arms. There were little feathers sprouting out of her skin! The professor looked down at a puddle of chemicals and saw a beak growing where her mouth once was. She yelled, "No, I am a monster!"



Lesson: Floating Down the River

Mentor Text: Daisy Comes Home by Jan Brett



Three-Sentence Overview of this Lesson: After studying the amount of details shared while Daisy floats down the river in the middle of Jan Brett's story, Daisy Comes Home, students will plan a story where they float down a river. Like Daisy, they will encounter animals as they float. Using this lesson's graphic organizer, students will plan a story that is well-paced by using an equal amount of details and sentences as they describe each encounter with each animal.

6-Trait Overview for this Lesson: The focus trait for this writing assignment is **organization**; "to pace" a piece of writing means the author has pre-planned equal attention to parts of a story that are equally important, and this assignment shows students how to pre-plan for this before writing a rough draft. The support trait in this assignment is **idea development**; writers are asked to brainstorm the most important and memorable details before they write.

Teacher Instructions & Lesson Resources:

Step one (sharing the published model): Teachers should first read the book aloud to their students, emphasizing, "Who do you think Daisy will meet next?" Advice from Karen: "Children familiar with Jan Brett's books have discovered that by looking at the borders of each page you have a hint as to what might happen next. Brett has developed this unique style to help children predict what will come next. Subsequently, this technique lends itself well for children to organize their own writing into a step-by-step approach and to provide a satisfying ending."

Once you and your students have thoroughly enjoyed Brett's story as a whole piece of text, go back and re-read just the pages in the center where Daisy encounters the animals. Point out how each animal is given equal time in the story, and how a fairly equal amount of details and sentences are used to describe the encounter. In good writing, this is called "pacing," and writers learning about organization need to plan a story where they try the same thing.

What's bad pacing in writing? Students always enjoy hearing the story of the student who wanted to write about his summer trip to Disneyland. He spent five pages describing the packing of the family' vehicle, then was so tired of writing that he only spent a half of a page describing the actual rides. This is poorly planned pacing.

Step two (introducing student models of writing): Before having your students pre-write to create their own descriptive paragraphs, have them discuss any of the student samples that come with this writing lesson. Have students count the number of sentences and details in each writer's sample so they can decide how well the pacing of the story came across to the reader. There are multiple samples on-line at the online version of this lesson at WritingFix.



In the Rain Forest

by Austin, 3rd grade writer

I'm climbing into the mouth of the Amazon River when I meet 3 fascinating animals. I am caught in rapids, seeing lazy fish, round rocks and a sunken raft. I smell the bitter smell of oil and rotten seaweed. I taste salt water. Read more.

When I am floating down the river, I see a branch with a boa constrictor squeezing a mouse to its death. It comes closer to me and is looking as evil as it can. When I float under the boa, my teeth chatter from fear.

The next thing I see is a tiger shark just swallowing the remains of a clownfish. He is coming nearer and nearer, looking very hungry. Then a fin pops out of the water.

When I swim past the shark, I see an okapi. It's coming nearer with fascination. When it's real close to the water, it eats some grass. I reach out and pet it.

I need to get out now. When I get out, I'm in the rainforest and thinking about how exciting the adventure was.

Step three (thinking and pre-writing): Time to plan a well-paced story. The interactive button game on the website's student instructions page will give your students plenty of choices for different rivers to write about. Once they have decided that, they can use the pre-writing worksheet and the drafting worksheet to plan their stories.

Encourage your writers to use the most memorable and interesting details on their brainstorming sheets! You'll be surprised how many of those details make their way to the story's first draft!

Require your students to write the sentences they put on the drafting worksheet onto a lined piece of paper.

Step four (revising with specific trait language): Two tools for revision are provided below. You can use one or both, depending on how much time you have to spend on this assignment.

To promote response and revision to rough draft writing, attach WritingFix's Revision and Response Post-Its to your students' drafts. Make sure the students **rank** their use of the trait-specific skills on the Post-Its, which means they'll only have one "1" and one "5." Have them commit to ideas for revision based on their Post-It rankings.

<p style="text-align: center;">Organization:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rank each skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — My introduction grabs the reader's attention. — My conclusion links back to my introduction. — I used transition words to move from idea to idea. — My paragraphs show where my sub-topics begin & end. — My title stands for my entire draft, not just a part of it. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Idea Development:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rank each skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — I used a balance of showing and telling. — My details try to paint a picture in the reader's head. — I took a unique approach when writing about this topic. — I stayed on topic throughout the entire writing. — My theme/message is clear to my reader.
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Step five (editing for conventions): After students apply their revision ideas to their drafts and re-write neatly, require them to find an editor. If you've established a "Community of Editors" among your students, have each student exchange his/her paper with multiple peers. With yellow high-lighters in hand, each peer reads for and highlights suspected errors for just one item from the Editing Post-it. The "Community of Editors" idea is just one of dozens and dozens of inspiring ideas that is talked about in detail in the Northern Nevada Writing Project's **Going Deep with 6 Trait Language Workbook for Teachers**.

Step six (publishing for the portfolio): When they are finished revising and have second drafts, invite your students to come back to this piece once more during an upcoming writer's workshop block. Their stories might become a longer story, a more detailed piece, or the beginning of a series of pieces about the story they started here. Students will probably enjoy creating an illustration for this story as they get ready to publish it for their portfolios.

Writer's name:

Floating Down the River

an original assignment from WritingFix (Pre-Writing Worksheet)

Like the hen in Jan Brett's Daisy Comes Home, you will imagine that you are on an adventure today and that you are floating down a river. In your story, you will meet three animals. You will share an equal amount of details about these three animals. Your story will have an equal number of sentences about these three animals.

Let's plan your story!

Close your eyes and imagine this. **You are on an inner-tube enjoying a warm and refreshing float on a gentle river.** What details do you see in your mind when you think of this? Write them below, and try to write down both things you see (nouns) and describing words (adjectives).



Details I want my reader to see:

Now imagine this. **You meet an animal in or near the river.** What animal will it be? What will it be doing as you float by? What important details might you include to help your reader see the same animal you see in your head?

First animal:	What is it doing when you see it?	What important details should you share?

Writer's name:

Floating Down the River

an original assignment from WritingFix (Drafting Worksheet)

Now it's time to write the sentences that will make your story!

First your story will need an introduction. Why not describe you climbing into the river on your inner tube? Why not use some of the best details from the first box on your pre-writing sheet? Can you come up with two or three good sentences that introduce your story? Write them below:

Next, you need to see and describe the first animal you see. Can you come up with two or three good sentences that show your first animal really well? Write them below:

For the next part of your story, you need to see and describe the second animal you meet. Can you come up with the same number of good sentences that you used when describing your first animal? Write your sentences below:

Now, you need to see and describe the third animal you meet. Can you come up with the same number of good sentences that you used when describing your first and second animals? Write your sentences below:

Finally, you need to climb out of the river and end your adventure. Can you come up with one or two sentences that use details to show you getting out of the river? Write them below.

Writer's name:

Austin 3 grade

Floating Down the River

an original assignment from WritingFix (Pre-Writing Worksheet)

Like the hen in Jan Brett's Daisy Comes Home, you will imagine that you are on an adventure today and that you are floating down a river. In your story, you will meet three animals. You will share an equal amount of details about these three animals. Your story will have an equal number of sentences about these three animals.

Let's plan your story!

Close your eyes and imagine this. **You are on an inner-tube enjoying a warm and refreshing float on a gentle river.** What details do you see in your mind when you think of this? Write them below, and try to write down both things you see (nouns) and describing words (adjectives).



Details I want my reader to see:

see
ratbeds
smell
bittersmell of
lazy fish
smell of rotten oil
round rocks
Taste of seaweed
a old sunken raft
soft rubber of the inner tube
green water
polluted water

Now imagine this. **You meet an animal in or near the river.** What animal will it be? What will it be doing as you float by? What important details might you include to help your reader see the same animal you see in your head?

First animal:	What is it doing when you see it?	What important details should you share?
The boa constrictor	squeezing it's prey and swallowing it.	it's on a tree branch coming nearer and nearer and enlocking it's jaw. Looking as evil as it can.

You float past the first animal.

Next imagine this. **You meet a different animal in or near the river.** What animal will it be? What will it be doing as you float by? What important details might you include to help your reader see the same animal you see in your head?

Second animal:	What is it doing when you see it?	What important details should you share?
a tiger shark	swallowing a clown fish whole,	and coming nearer and nearer opening it's mouth closing it. A fin popping out of the water.

You float past the second animal.

Then imagine this. **You meet a third animal in or near the river.** What animal will it be? What will it be doing as you float by? What important details might you include to help your reader see the same animal you see in your head?

Third animal:	What is it doing when you see it?	What important details should you share?
an Okapi	coming nearer in fasination.	as it comes nearer it eating some grass. and as I float by I reach out and pet it.

You float past the third animal. Your adventure is almost over.

Now you need to get out of the river. Where will you land? How do you feel? What does the river look like where you leave it? Write some final details below.

Details:
When I get out I'm in rain forest and thinking about how exciting and how lucky I was to make it out alive,

Writer's name:

Austin

3 grade

Floating Down the River

an original assignment from WritingFix (Drafting Worksheet)

Now it's time to write the sentences that will make your story!

First your story will need an introduction. Why not describe you climbing into the river on your inner tube? Why not use some of the best details from the first box on your pre-writing sheet? Can you come up with two or three good sentences that introduce your story? Write them below:

I'm climbing into the mouth of the Amazon river
When I meet 3 fascinating animals, caught
in ratbeds seeing lazy fish, round rocks and a
sunken raft. Smelling the bitter smell of oil and
rotten seaweed. Tasting salt water. Read more.

Next, you need to see and describe the first animal you see. Can you come up with two or three good sentences that show your first animal really well? Write them below:

When I'm floating down the river. I see a branch
with a boa constrictor squeezing a mouse
to it's fall. And coming closer to me and looking
as evil as it can.

For the next part of your story, you need to see and describe the second animal you meet. Can you come up with the same number of good sentences that you used when describing your first animal? Write your sentences below:

When a float past the boat I see a tiger shark
just swallowing the remains of a clownfish,
And coming nearer and nearer looking very hungry,
Then a fin pops out of the water.

Now, you need to see and describe the third animal you meet. Can you come up with the same number of good sentences that you used when describing your first and second animals? Write your sentences below:

When swim past the shark I see an Okapi,
It's coming nearer with fascination
When it's real close to the water it eats
some grass, I reach out and pet it. Then
I need to get out now.

Finally, you need to climb out of the river and end your adventure. Can you come up with one or two sentences that use details to show you getting out of the river? Write them below.

When I get out ^{I'm} in the rainforest and thinking
about how exciting the adventure was.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision

Student Choice:
One of the Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

Corbett Harrison (<http://corbettharrison.com>)
Northern Nevada Writing Project (<http://nnwp.org>)
Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (<http://nwrpd.com>)
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Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Choice is a Powerful Classroom Motivator

A skillful teacher who differentiates instruction will "Provide a balance between teacher-assigned and student-selected tasks. A balanced working structure is optimal in a differentiated classroom, but the balance will vary from class to class as well as lesson-to-lesson. Teachers should assure that students have choices in their learning."

--Tracey Hall, Ph.D.

student choice continuum

student choice without parameters student choice within teacher-made parameters

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Many D.I. Tools Give Students Choices within Parameters

Contract

1. Pick one circle job, one rectangle job and one square job. Use the same shape.

2. Give the job the place to be in the black shape that matches the one you pick.

3. Complete each of your three choices and make them to the contract.

4. Each part of your contract is worth two points.

Character

Write a story about a character who lives in a circle. Write a story about a character who lives in a rectangle. Write a story about a character who lives in a square.

Job

Write a story about a job that is in a circle. Write a story about a job that is in a rectangle. Write a story about a job that is in a square.

Setting

Write a story about a setting that is in a circle. Write a story about a setting that is in a rectangle. Write a story about a setting that is in a square.

Student Contracts

Contract Checklist: What are the literacy elements that make up your story?

Circle shape _____ /10
 Square shape _____ /10
 Rectangle shape _____ /10
 Total _____ /30

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Many D.I. Tools Give Students Choices within Parameters

Task Rotations

Why are the natural cycles important to an ecosystem? L.S.C.2: How do organisms interact with each other and with their non-living parts of their habitat?	Interpersonal
Mastery List the three natural cycles. Describe how each part of the cycle contributes to an ecosystem. 1. The three cycles are identified. 2. The parts of the cycle are listed. 3. The explanation about the role of each part is clear and correct.	Create a game, skit or bulletin board that will teach someone about each cycle. This activity must tell why each cycle is important to an ecosystem. 1. The three cycles are identified. 2. The parts of the cycle are included. 3. The activity clearly and correctly explains why each part is important.
Understanding Create a labeled diagram for each natural cycle. Each diagram will explain how that cycle contributes to an ecosystem. 1. How are these diagrams - one for each cycle. 2. Each diagram clearly and correctly describes the cycle. 3. Each diagram explains how the cycle is important to an ecosystem.	Self-Expressive Create a representation showing each cycle's contribution to an ecosystem. Examples include a drawing, a poem, a skit or other creative ideas. 1. Show the three cycles. 2. Describe the parts of the cycle. 3. Clearly and correctly explain how each part is important to an ecosystem.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Many D.I. Tools Give Students Choices within Parameters


Choice Menus

Solve a book of math word problems on a topic you are currently studying for your classroom to solve.	Create an award for your favorite book or book character that would encourage others to read the book.	Create a comic strip to describe the adventures of your favorite animal.
Create a timeline chart showing the order of events of the life of a famous person. Use one book for each major event.	Student Choice	Illustrate a butterfly about the life cycle of a butterfly.
Create a Venn diagram comparing two cultures with a different culture.	Survey your classmates about their favorite... Create a graph displaying your findings.	Research the flag of a city or state. On the back write important facts about the state or city.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

The Writers Workshop Philosophy Centers on Choice

- Students choose from writer's notebooks and journals which ideas they'll take through the writing process;
- Students choose which final drafts will go in their portfolios;
- Students can choose to abandon a piece of writing, if it is no longer "working" for them;
- Students choose (and communicate to the teacher) which step of the process they're committed to during writing blocks.



The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

How I First Brought Choice to My Writers:
Coffee Can Journal Prompts



Teaching nouns?
Student took one card from each coffee can as they entered class and had to write a descriptive paragraph in their journals that somehow put all three nouns together. Students were allowed to exchange one card, if they couldn't make it work.

wizard, hobo, queen, dog catcher, nerd, beauty pageant contestant, etc.	subway, castle, cave, football field, abandoned house, supermarket, oasis, etc.	umbrella, diamond, key, net, coin, lunchbox, coffee can, flower, bumblebee, etc.
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Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

When we launched WritingFix, my first major contribution was online versions of the Coffee Can Journal Prompts

We called them our "Serendipity Prompts" and their sole purpose was to promote **student choice** when choosing a topic to write about:

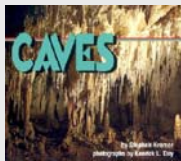
Write about this serendipitous person:



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Let's look at this idea embedded in a 7-Element Lesson!



The Caves lesson at WritingFix is both popular and a great examples of all seven elements working together in a single lesson.

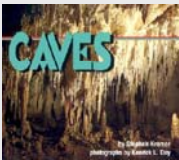
Lesson Title: [Start with what isn't there](#)
Lesson author: Corbett Harrison
Overview: Students add mood to a setting description by imitating a real author's technique.
Focus Skill: adding mood (voice)
Support Skill: Memorable details (idea development)
Mentor Text: *Caves* by Stephen Kramer
Graphic Organizer #1: Brainstorms details
Graphic Organizer #2: Organizes details into two parts
Student Models: Grades 2-5, 7, 9, 11
Choice: Students can choose their setting and the mood they wish to convey through writing
Talk: While analyzing student models, filling out graphic organizer, revising with the post-its.
Revision: Voice & Idea Development Post-its

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Let's look at this idea embedded in a 7-Element Lesson!




The *Caves* lesson at WritingFix is both popular and a great example of all seven elements working together in a single lesson.

Using the mentor text: This is a non-fiction text about how caves are formed. It has beautiful pictures, but the most beautiful thing about the book, I think, is its two-page introduction. On a page as black as midnight, Kramer first of all explains things you would *not* find in a cave. On the second page, we see a beautiful photograph of a cave being explored with flashlights, and Kramer now describes what we would see. His descriptive language is strengthened with his verb use, but it's the technique of starting a description with what *isn't* there that adds true *voice* to this writing. A definite mood is established for the reader with this clever stylistic device. This technique is imitate-able, and students can describe other settings using it.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Let's look at this idea embedded in a 7-Element Lesson!



The *Caves* lesson at WritingFix is both popular and a great example of all seven elements working together in a single lesson.

Talking about the student samples before writing: I like to share the mentor text's two-page introduction and not immediately tell students about Kramer's technique of starting his description with what *isn't* there. It's used so seamlessly that rarely do I have a pupil be able to put into words what he's done.

When I share student samples with this lesson, I ask students to look for similarities and differences in the mentor text and the student samples.

After some great discussion, the students usually start seeing the technique with minimal prodding, but it usually takes two or three student samples to help them make the discovery.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

The Haunted Ship
by Danny, third grade writer


There are no people. No one has gone there. No music has been played. No plants have grown. There was no light, not even a pinch.

Five kids didn't believe in it until it happened. They were taken by the ship. There were spiders everywhere, even skeletons. Every night they heard noises. That night mummies were walking. They were never seen again.

Click [here](#) to see different examples from different grade levels online.

I don't know if this is an original story idea Danny has started, or if it's based on a movie or book, but this is a pretty sophisticated launch of a story for a student with language issues. "Not even a pinch" was not in Danny's rough draft at all, and adding it truly brought what I call a "sparkle" to the writing.

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson



The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

(This sample is only available online!)

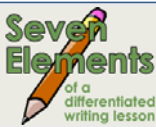

Rain Forest Poem
by Konor, fourth grade writer

Towering trees blocking the sun.
No houses, no people,
Nothing to do
Except look at the beautiful glory.
It's every animal for
Himself out there.

Jaguars glaring from tree to tree.
The prey and predators are lurking.
Snakes are slithering, rats are quivering.
So full of wonder.

Click [here](#) to see different examples from different grade levels online.

Konor's teacher gave her students the **choice** of writing prose or poetry about the rainforest they were studying; Konor's use of the technique in his poem certainly adds voice to the poem.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?



Mexico Trip
by Justin, fifth grade writer

My dad and I went to Mexico for summer vacation. What were we doing in Mexico? Good question. My dad would not tell me. When we pulled up to this place, I went cold. It was definitely not a mansion. It was not even a medium-sized house! We got out of the car. When we got in the house as tiny as a mouse hole, my jaw dropped immediately. There were no living plants, no lights, no clean walls or countertops andNO TELEVISION! I felt a tear in my eye.

The beds were made out of pure stone. The toilets.....you don't want to know. All of the nonliving plants were pure black. I finally blinked and tears came pouring out. My dad took me out on a hike to let me cool down, but it didn't work. I suffered in that cave my dad called a house for a month.

Click [here](#) to see different examples from different grade levels online.

Justin was a student who already had pretty strong voice, but his use of the technique gave him a new tool to try. He was especially proud of his subtle tribute to the mentor text's title in his final sentence.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

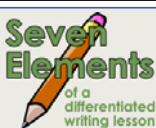

My Room
by Brandon, eleventh grade writer

I enter my room. No silence here. It is an area void of any order or neatness. I know only by faith that the floor is even there, hidden beneath mounds of dirty and clean clothes. The walls, invisible under posters and pictures, souvenirs and snapshots, haven't seen the light of day in years.

I take a step further in, being careful to avoid what could be hiding under the mounds of stuff that buries my floor. The stereo is booming beside my bed, which is unmade. This is a room of beautiful disorder. All four walls are one big collage.

Click [here](#) to see different examples from different grade levels online.

Brandon's sample remains one of the best I've ever received. I particularly like how short it is compared to my fifth grade sample, but with language use it's developmentally more sophisticated. I use this sample to prove to my students that making writing longer doesn't assure it's making it better.

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Seven Elements of a differentiated writing lesson

Because the task is pretty challenging, I provide a teacher model of the whole process.

Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Two-part Advanced Organizer

Graphic Organizer to help begin to shape the writing

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Seven Elements of a differentiated writing lesson

(page ____ of your "Seven Elements" Packet)

The strength of the lesson, I believe, is its element of choice:

Students are allowed to choose a mood (emotion) they want their reader to feel.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Seven Elements of a differentiated writing lesson

The strength of the lesson, I believe, is its element of choice:

Interactive Choices for Writing:

If you're struggling to start, click the buttons below for some ideas that might inspire you to launch your piece of writing.

CLICK here for setting ideas (It's okay to come up with your own setting for this activity. If you think of a better one.)

CLICK here for mood ideas (It's okay to come up with your own mood for this activity. If you think of a better one.)

After understanding the assignment and task, when students use the on-line interactive tool, an amazing amount of excitement is generated.

If you can't get your students online to press the buttons, find two coffee cans!

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?


WritingFix's lessons are MEANT to be adapted:

Setting #2: An Animal Shelter
by Maryn R., seventh grade writer

A lonely animal shelter sits. Not one family has entered in weeks. Abandoned and abused animals wait for good homes. Cute little puppies that have been hurt or neglected don't know whether they can trust people again. Barking, meowing, and chirping: sounds of animals who want to come out of their cages and play. Dull walls but comforting voices of veterinarians and nurses who want to help these animals. A newborn kitten is calling for her family. Meow.

Meow.

One day a girl comes in with her mom and dad. She is six years old. They are looking for a little friend for her. She hears a meow and out of the corner of her eye, she spots a newborn kitten. She turns around swiftly and walks over to its cage. Suddenly, she falls in love with this kitten. She has light brown fur with light orange stripes, and her fur is so soft, it's like a pillow! Her eyes are soft baby blue, like the sky on a bright, sunny day. She is so cheerful and small, she can fit in the palm of your hand. Nalah is this kitten's new name, and now she has an owner. Nalah will never be treated badly, and the little girl will always have a friend!




Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

My wife's adaptation of this lesson: Dena has her students **choose** two moods, and the writer's task is to change the reader's mood for the second paragraph!

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

Let's talk about "the illusion of choice" as opposed to "no choice"


No choice:	Illusion of choice:
<p>You're all going to use Kramer's technique to write about your school. Make your reader <i>feel</i> that your school is a positive place to work and learn.</p>	<p>You may choose one of the following five settings to try out Stephen Kramer's writing technique:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Your classroom •Your desktop •Your closet at home •The backseat of your car •Your refrigerator or pantry <p>You will choose one of the mood faces from the handout, and your task will be to make your reader feel that mood when you describe what isn't and what is in the personal location you've chosen.</p>



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

One last word from Stephen Kramer:



Kramer is one of Vicki Spandel's author-friends, and he sometimes guest presents at her workshops. Vicki had several of her author-friends contribute short essays to her [The 9 Rights of Every Writer: A Guide for Teachers](#).


Here is the introduction to the essay Stephen Kramer wrote for her:

"No training wheels. No steady hand on the seat. No one to catch you if you fall.

"Every time I begin a new piece of writing, I'm reminded of what it's like to ride a bicycle for the very first time. Uncertainty about what to do and when to do it. Worries about crashing. And the nagging feeling that, perhaps, the task is far too complicated to have any success."

--Stephen Kramer

Notice anything similar style-wise?



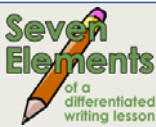
Seven Elements
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A Final Word about Choice during Writing Time:
In a great classroom, students are taught to make good choices about the writing process as well as their writing topics.


- Pre-writing:** Do I cluster, list, or design my own graphic organizer?
- Drafting:** Can I type my rough draft instead of handwrite it?
- Response Groups:** Can I choose who's in my response group today?
- Publishing:** Do I handwrite my final draft (with original illustrations), type it and use clip art, or post it on the class website?



Essential Questions: What's the difference between free choice and the "illusion of choice"? How does giving students choice invest them in the writing assignment?

A Final Word about Choice during Writing Time:
In a great classroom, students are taught to make good choices about the writing process as well as their writing topics.



Name: _____

Which two traits will I revise for?

Trait 1:	Trait 2:
List your strategies for revising this trait:	List your strategies for revising this trait:

The best writing process choice I ever worked into my writers workshop dealt with **revision.**

In my class, all students had to commit to revising for two traits on their portfolio pieces. They also had to write out several trait-inspired strategies before they began revising.

They chose one trait.

I chose the other.

This worked incredibly well for me and them.

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision

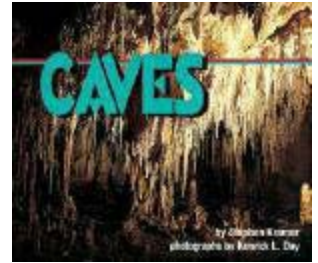
Student Choice:
a personal goal for this element might have you...

- Design choice lists or "coffee can prompts" to generate excitement about rough draft writing;
- Integrate "choice about writing topics" into old lessons or any new ones you design;
- Teach students to make "coffee can prompts" for each other;
- Teach students to make good choices during workshop time about any/all steps of the writing process.
- Or...?

Creating Choice Prompts for/with students Serendipitous Character Generator		
"A(n)" + adjective	Interesting character	Descriptive phrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ridiculous looking • An ecstatic • A nervous • An infuriated • A laughing • A sobbing • • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magician • Child • Singer • Twin • Babysitter • Barber • • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a mole on his nose • In a parade • With a cold • Who has lost something • Starving for attention • Playing Monopoly • • • • •

Creating Choice Prompts for/with students Serendipitous Title Generator	
"The" + adjective	Interesting Noun
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Invisible • The Spoiled • The Sleeping • The Piebald • The Undercover • • • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Princess • Video Game • Journal • Duck • Fireplace • • • • • •

Lesson: Start with What *Isn't* There
Mentor Text: Caves by Stephen Kramer



Three-Sentence Overview of this Lesson: The writer will describe a setting, attempting to set a mood for his/her reader in two paragraphs. Borrowing a technique from Stephen Kramer's two-page introduction to Caves, the writer will begin with a paragraph that explains what isn't in a setting. The second paragraph will describe things that are present.

6-Trait Overview for this Lesson: The focus trait in this writing assignment is **voice**; the writer's goal is to set a mood with the words he/she chooses. The support trait in this assignment is **idea development**; strong details are encouraged through the graphic organizer that comes with the lesson.

Teacher Instructions & Lesson Resources:

Step one (sharing the published model): Read aloud just the introduction to Caves, which can be found on the first two pages of the book. Discuss how author Stephen Kramer first describes what isn't there, and then describes what is. This simple writing technique not only shows us the setting uniquely, but it sets a mood for us as readers. Inform students that they will be imitating Kramer's technique by applying it to an original setting. Like Kramer, who sets a mood of coldness and lifelessness, your students will attempt to establish their own mood through their carefully chosen words.

Step two (introducing student models of writing): In small groups, have your students read and respond to any or all of the student models that come with this lesson. The groups should certainly talk about the **voice**, but you might also have your students talk about the **idea development** in the writing too. There are multiple samples on-line at the online version of this lesson at WritingFix.

The Haunted Ship

by Danny, third grade writer

There are no people. No one has gone there. No music has been played. No plants have grown. There was no light, not even a pinch.

Five kids didn't believe in it until it happened. They were taken by the ship. There were spiders everywhere, even skeletons. Every night they heard noises. That night mummies were walking. They were never seen again.



The Beach

by Amanda, fourth grade writer

A day at the beach is nothing like a day at home. The sound of the waves is not interrupted by the noise of the television. There is no furniture in the way of the sand castles. Beauty can be found at the beach.

A day at the beach is full of sunshine and waves. Cool ocean waves crash into the hot, soft, sand pushing the seashells onto the shore. The laughter of children can be heard while building sand castles. The birds soar across the blue sky searching for left over picnic food. The beach is a great place to be.



Mexico Trip

by Justin, fifth grade writer

My dad and I went to Mexico for summer vacation. What were we doing in Mexico? Good question. My dad would not tell me. When we pulled up to this place, I went cold. It was definitely not a mansion. It was not even a medium-sized house! We got out of the car. When we got in the house as tiny as a mouse hole, my jaw dropped immediately. There were no living plants, no lights, no clean walls or countertops andNO TELEVISION! I felt a tear in my eye.

The beds were made out of pure stone. The toilets....you don't want to know. All of the nonliving plants were pure black. I finally blinked and tears came pouring out. My dad took me out on a hike to let me cool down, but it didn't work. I suffered in that cave my dad called a house for a month.



My Room

by Brandon, eleventh grade writer

I enter my room. No silence here. It is an area void of any order or neatness. I know only by faith that the floor is even there, hidden beneath mounds of dirty and clean clothes. The walls, invisible under posters and pictures, souvenirs and snapshots, haven't seen the light of day in years.

I take a step further in, being careful to avoid what could be hiding under the mounds of stuff that buries my floor. The stereo is booming beside my bed, which is unmade. This is a room of beautiful disorder. All four walls are one big collage.



Step three (thinking and pre-writing): The interactive word game on the online lesson's student instruction page will inspire your students to combine many setting ideas with different moods as a pre-writing exercise. Students can certainly find successful ideas for this writing prompt through discussion and brainstorming away from the computer, but the computer word game is a great generator of ideas and possibilities. Once students have chosen a setting and a mood, they need to list 5-10 things that **would be** found in their setting, and 5-10 things that **would not be**. The **would-not-be's** are a little harder, and students will benefit from sharing their pre-writing worksheets with each other, and asking for inspiration from fellow students.

Step four (revising with specific trait language): Two tools for revision are provided below. You can use one or both, depending on how much time you have to spend on this assignment.

To promote response and revision to rough draft writing, attach WritingFix's Revision and Response Post-Its to your students' drafts. Make sure the students **rank** their use of the trait-specific skills on the Post-Its, which means they'll only have one "1" and one "5." Have them commit to ideas for revision based on their Post-It rankings.

Voice:	Idea Development:
Rank each skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:	Rank each skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:
<input type="checkbox"/> I really tried to show passion about my topic.	<input type="checkbox"/> I used a balance of showing and telling.
<input type="checkbox"/> If read aloud, it sounds like something I might really say.	<input type="checkbox"/> My details try to paint a picture in the reader's head.
<input type="checkbox"/> I did things in my writing to help my audience understand.	<input type="checkbox"/> I took a unique approach when writing about this topic.
<input type="checkbox"/> I captured a tone or mood with my words.	<input type="checkbox"/> I stayed on topic throughout the entire writing.
<input type="checkbox"/> My use of humor or sarcasm is appropriate for this assignment.	<input type="checkbox"/> My theme/message is clear to my reader.

Step five (editing for conventions): After students apply their revision ideas to their drafts and re-write neatly, require them to find an editor. If you've established a "Community of Editors" among your students, have each student exchange his/her paper with multiple peers. With yellow high-lighters in hand, each peer reads for and highlights suspected errors for just one item from the Editing Post-it. The "Community of Editors" idea is just one of dozens and dozens of inspiring ideas that is talked about in detail in the Northern Nevada Writing Project's **Going Deep with 6 Trait Language Workbook for Teachers**.

Step six (publishing for the portfolio): When they are finished revising and have second drafts, invite your students to come back to this piece once more during an upcoming writer's workshop block. Their stories might become a longer story, a more detailed piece, or the beginning of a series of pieces about the story they started here. Students will probably enjoy creating an illustration for this story as they get ready to publish it for their portfolios.

Writer's name:

Establishing a Setting with Mood or Tone

Inspired by the opening paragraphs of Stephen Kramer's Caves

Student Instructions: Today you will be writing a two-paragraph setting description. Using author Stephen Kramer as your model, you will first describe what isn't in the setting in a descriptive paragraph. Then, you will describe what is. Before writing, choose the mood you want to establish.

Setting:

Mood:

Pre-write #1: Thinking about your chosen mood, list five to ten things that **WOULD NOT** be in this place:

Pre-write #2: Thinking about your chosen mood, list five to ten things that **WOULD DEFINITELY** be in this place:

You might want to re-read the introduction to Caves once more before drafting in the boxes below.

Paragraph #1: Introduce us to where your setting is. Then, using your list of what ISN'T there, describe your setting by sharing what your reader would not find in this setting.

Paragraph #2: Shed a little light on your setting now. Use your list of what IS there, and help your reader see your setting. Keep your mood in mind as you write this second paragraph.

If you like your two-paragraph setting description, why not create a story that could follow it?
Bring in a character and have something happen.

Writer's name:

Establishing a Setting with Mood or Tone

Inspired by the opening paragraphs of Stephen Kramer's Caves

Student Instructions: Today you will be writing a two-paragraph setting description. Using author Stephen Kramer as your model, you will first describe what isn't in the setting in a descriptive paragraph. Then, you will describe what is. Before writing, choose the mood you want to establish.

Setting: **Movie Theater**

Mood: **Anxiousness** (for a new scary movie)

Pre-write #1: Thinking about your chosen mood, list five to ten things that **WOULD NOT** be in this place:

- People yawning
- People text messaging on cel phones
- People leaving to get popcorn
- Late-comers
- Empty chairs
- Loud talking
- Small kids

Pre-write #2: Thinking about your chosen mood, list five to ten things that **WOULD DEFINITELY** be in this place:

- Nervous excitement & laughter
- Watch checkers
- Ushers (checking tickets)
- Shushing of loud talkers
- Nail-biters
- Quiet conversations

You might want to re-read the introduction to Caves once more before drafting in the boxes below.

Paragraph #1: Introduce us to where your setting is. Then, using your list of what ISN'T there, describe your setting by sharing what your reader would not find in this setting.

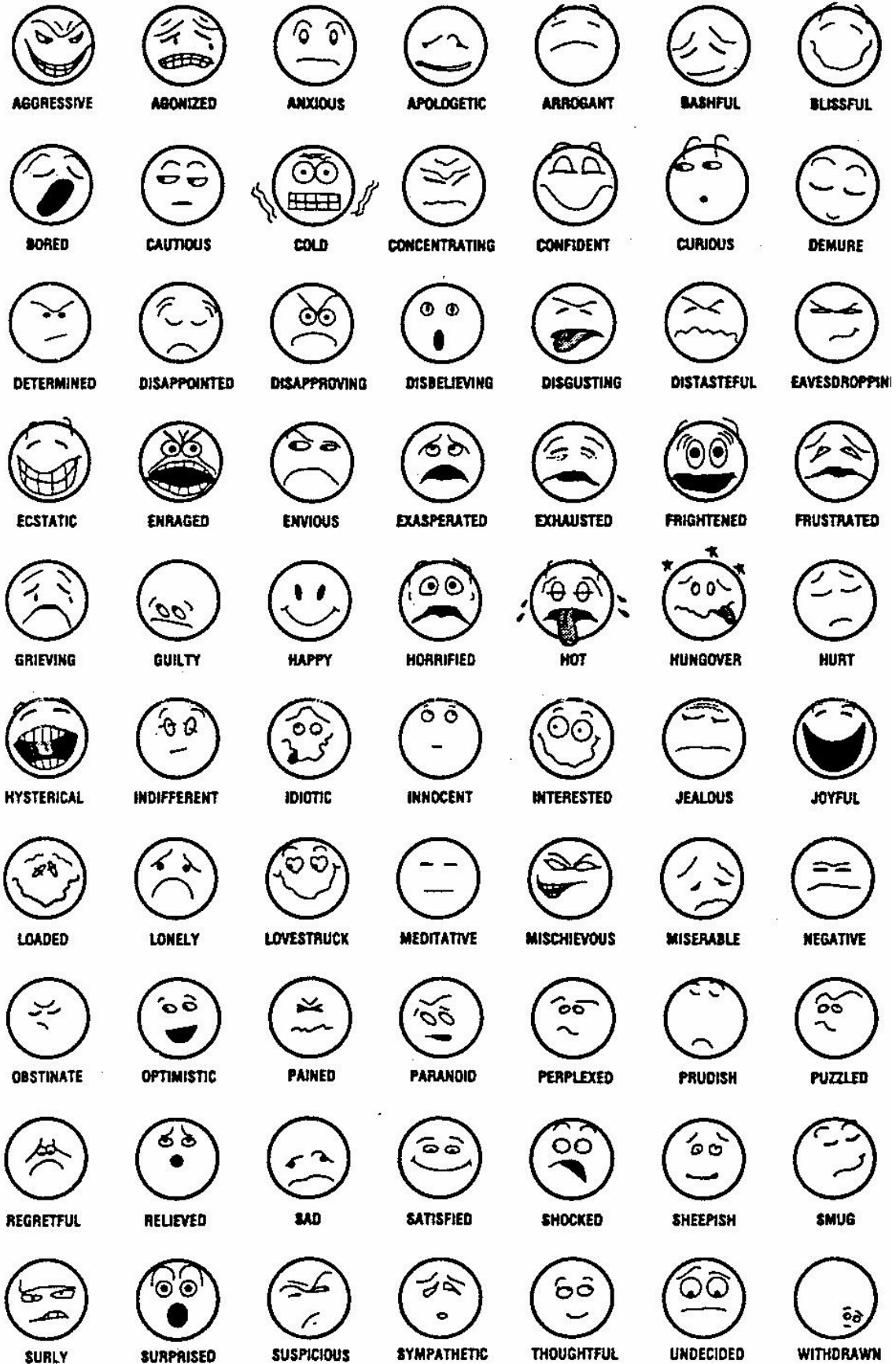
The movie theater is dim. Five minutes to the start of what they say is the scariest film ever made. There are no spaces between seats because this showing was sold out hours ago. No one dares leave for popcorn this close to start time. No one is yawning or typing cel phone text messages. Conversations are almost undecipherable, but people are definitely asking about how scary could one film really be. No one has brought their kids to this movie.

An usher appears, checking the legitimacy of tickets from those who look young enough to have snuck in. His flashlight illuminates the nervous excitement. Several patrons check their watches. *Shouldn't this have started by now?* their eyes ask. Someone shushes someone else talking too loud. Another nervous laugh comes through. The lights are dimming. This will be the scariest movie ever.

Paragraph #2: Shed a little light on your setting now. Use your list of what IS there, and help your reader see your setting. Keep your mood in mind as you write this second paragraph.

If you like your two-paragraph setting description, why not create a story that could follow it? Bring in a character and have something happen.

Character Faces



This one-pager was originally found on the Internet with the instructions "Distribute freely." That was years ago, and we can no longer find it to link to. We provide it here for teachers and their classrooms, and hope that for educational purposes, we are still encouraged to distribute it freely.

Choices from the online “coffee cans” at WritingFix’s Caves Lesson:

Setting Choices:	Mood Choices:
1. a beach 2. a forest 3. a jungle 4. a desert 5. a classroom 6. a gymnasium 7. a mansion 8. a ghost town 9. a restaurant 10. a fishing hole 11. an abandoned house 12. an amusement park 13. a circus 14. a museum 15. an alley 16. a busy street 17. a hospital 18. an animal shelter 19. a battlefield 20. a garden	1. danger 2. fear 3. calm 4. caution 5. bliss 6. excitement 7. desperation 8. nervousness 9. grief 10. hope 11. hopelessness 12. amazement 13. curiosity 14. compassion 15. anger 16. disappointment 17. boredom 18. respect 19. pride 20. panic

Setting with mood: **An Animal Shelter**

by Maryn R., seventh grade writer

A lonely animal shelter sits. Not one family has entered in weeks. Abandoned and abused animals wait for good homes. Cute little puppies that have been hurt or neglected don't know whether they can trust people again. Barking, meowing, and chirping: sounds of animals who want to come out of their cages and play. Dulls walls but comforting voices of veterinarians and nurses who want to help these animals. A newborn kitten is calling for her family. Meow

Meow

Meow.

One day a girl comes in with her mom and dad. She is six years old. They are looking for a little friend for her. She hears a meow and out of the corner of her eye, she spots a newborn kitten. She turns around swiftly and walks over to its cage. Suddenly, she falls in love with this kitten. She has light brown fur with light orange stripes, and her fur is so soft, it's like a pillow! Her eyes are soft baby blue, like the sky on a bright, sunny day. She is so cheerful and small, she can fit in the palm of your hand. Nalah is this kitten's new name, and now she has an owner. Nalah will never be treated badly, and the little girl will always have a friend!



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The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements

- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision

Let's Talk about Student Models:

Two of the Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

Corbett Harrison (<http://corbettharrison.com>)
 Northern Nevada Writing Project (<http://nnwp.org>)
 Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (<http://nwrpd.com>)
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Essential Questions: What are the dangers and the benefits of showing students models of the writing before they write? How can student models be used to generate skill-focused discussions?

The *This is Just to Say* lesson at WritingFix was featured at the NNWP's 2008 Piñon Poetry Festival.

Lesson Title: [Poems of Apology](#)
Lesson author: Todd Herman, HS math teacher (NNWP)
Overview: Students learn about making sentences and ideas flow by imitating Carlos' poem with original ideas about something they're sort of sorry for.
Focus Skill: Sentence rhythm (sentence fluency)
Support Skill: unique topics (idea development)
Mentor Texts: *This is Just to Say* by Joyce Kilmer and *This is Just to Say* by William Carlos Williams
Student Models: Grades 3-5, 8, 11, 12

Essential Questions: What are the dangers and the benefits of showing students models of the writing before they write? How can student models be used to generate skill-focused discussions?

Mom
by Keely, third grade poet

Forgive me
 For sneaking downstairs
 And interrupting your party
 But I was starving
 And the candies were...
 Calling me
 I didn't know what to do
 So I just took them
 Please forgive me

Sorry for Drinking Your Tea
by Elise, fifth grade poet


I am sorry for drinking your tea
 It looked so icy, cold and delicious
 I could have gone and got my own drink
 But the fridge was too far away
 The first drink just sat there and called me
 I would tell you I would not do it again
 But then I would just be lying
 Plus you probably would have done the same

Compare these poets' sentence fluency.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What are the dangers and the benefits of showing students models of the writing before they write? How can student models be used to generate skill-focused discussions?

Pancake Thief
by Connor, 8th grade




Forgive me
For stealing
Your pancakes

I sneaked over
While you were gone
I stole them so quickly
Eating them even faster

So warm and soft
Your pancakes were
Filled with butter and syrup
Delicious

Many Apologies
by Amy, 8th grade



I'm sorry for all the silly things I have done
Burning my hand
Sewing my finger
Leaving toothpicks out on which dad stepped on
I was young and foolish, no care in the world

I'm sorry for all the past things that have occurred
Skipping my lessons
Wasting my life on the computer
Breaking six plates in three days
I wasn't thinking of the outcome

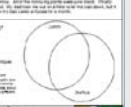
For all these things I apologize
For you are my mother, the one who has taught me so much
Now though, I have learned from my mistakes and corrected them
Allowing me to excel in my academic career and studies

Once more, I am sorry for causing you any stress
In the future, I hope to make it up to you

Compare these poets' word choices.

Essential Questions: What are the dangers and the benefits of showing students models of the writing before they write? How can student models be used to generate skill-focused discussions?

Work with a partner to place "voice vocabulary" in the Venn Diagram.



Compare and Contrast Thinking Guide

How are they alike? How are they different?

How are they alike? How are they different?

How are they alike? How are they different?

In 2008, the NNWP's *Going Deep with Compare & Contrast Thinking Guide* inspired me to use better comparative thinking in my teaching and planning.

Essential Questions: What are the dangers and the benefits of showing students models of the writing before they write? How can student models be used to generate skill-focused discussions?


In Nevada, or 5th, 8th and 11th graders are tested in writing and assessed using trait rubrics.

For years, we've been encouraging our teachers to use designated practice prompts many months before the actual test is given. The practice prompt resources we provide give teachers the ability to score and explain scores to students.

Sparklers reminded us of the importance of using "sparkling" student examples as part of the learning process.

Our students are asked to analyze the strengths in our Nevada Sparklers, and then to apply skills when they write to the same practice prompts.

SPARKLERS
High Scoring Test Essays and What They Teach Us
by Gretchen Bernabei & Judy Reimer



The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

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Sparklers: High Scoring Test Essays and What They Teach Us by Gretchen Bernabei & Judy Reimer

Work with a partner to fill in the two boxes on Kate's page.

Essential Questions: What are the dangers and the benefits of showing students models of the writing before they write? How can student models be used to generate skill-focused discussions?

Sparklers: High Scoring Test Essays and What They Teach Us by Gretchen Bernabei & Judy Reimer

Work with a partner to fill in the two boxes on Brian's page.

Essential Questions: What are the dangers and the benefits of showing students models of the writing before they write? How can student models be used to generate skill-focused discussions?

Sparklers: High Scoring Test Essays and What They Teach Us by Gretchen Bernabei & Judy Reimer

Work with a partner to award medals to these three writers as instructed on the handout in your packet.

<http://corbettharrison.com>
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Mexico Trip

by Justin S., fifth grade writer

My dad and I went to Mexico for summer vacation. What were we doing in Mexico? Good question. My dad would not tell me.

When we pulled up to this place, I went cold. It was definitely not a mansion. It was not even a medium-sized house! We got out of the car. When we got in the house as tiny as a mouse hole, my jaw dropped immediately. There were no living plants, no lights, no clean walls or countertops andNO TELEVISION! I felt a tear in my eye.

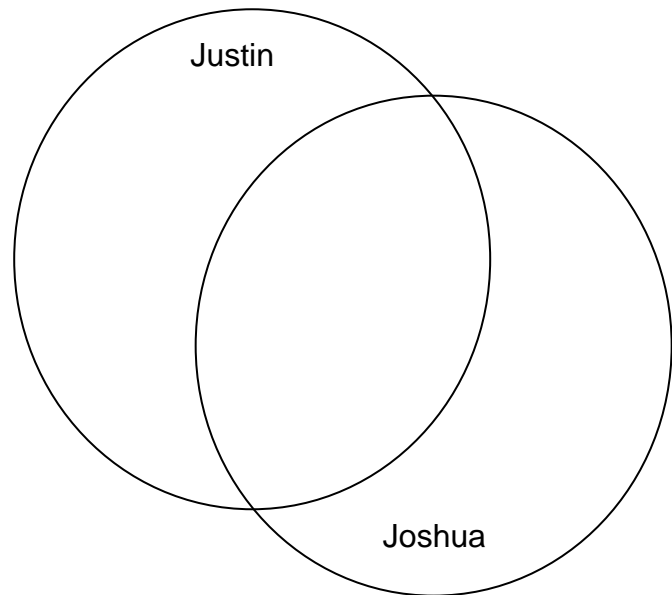
The beds were made out of pure stone. The toilets....you don't want to know. All of the nonliving plants were pure black. I finally blinked and tears came pouring out. My dad took me out on a hike to let me cool down, but it didn't work. I suffered in that cave my dad called a house for a month.

What's **voice** in writing?

It might be:

- ☐ Humor or sarcasm
- ☐ Point-of-view
- ☐ Passion or emotion
- ☐ Mood or tone
- ☐ Persuasive techniques
- ☐ Other stylistic writing techniques

Talk with a writing partner. Compare and contrast the **voice** techniques used by Justin and Joshua in their two different setting descriptions. Use this Venn diagram to record your ideas about how Justin and Joshua used similar and different **voice** techniques.



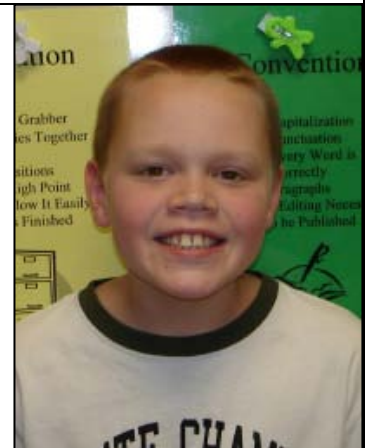
The Mars Rover

by Joshua M., fifth grade writer

This planet has never been stepped on or known to have any life. No working probe has reached this world. Almost no one knew anything of the Red Planet until now.

If you were on Mars in the year of 2003, you could look up into the atmosphere and see an object parachuting down to you, even though nothing lives on Mars. The object was a space rover wrapped in a mechanical ball. When it unfolded, NASA had to direct it down the ramp. There was a big problem. The rover was too big and it wasn't facing the ramp. Finally, it made it down safe.

This was one small roll for the rover but one big step for mankind.



Lesson: Poems of Apology

Mentor Texts: This is Just to Say by Joyce Sidman and *This is Just to Say* by W. C. Williams

Three-Sentence Overview of this Lesson: After comparing several of Joyce Sidman's poems from This is Just to Say with the original poem written W.C. Williams, students will plan an apology poem that asks for forgiveness, even if the asker doesn't really seek forgiveness. Students will list five things they wish they could be forgiven for, or they can make a list of five people for whom they might owe an apology. Then, inspired by the original poem or the poems in This is Just to Say, students will create an original poem of forgiveness.



6-Trait Overview for this Lesson: The focus trait in this writing assignment is **sentence fluency**; fitting original words into an original poem's rhythm scheme is a great way to experiment with sentences that flow. The support trait in this assignment is **idea development**; encourage your students to choose interesting words to rhyme with as they compose their apology poems explore the topics they choose uniquely and interestingly.

Teacher Instructions & Lesson Resources:

Step one (sharing the published model): Start by sharing William Carlos Williams poem from an overhead, then enjoy Joyce Sidman's This is Just to Say as a read-aloud with your students. Focus on several different examples, depending on your audience and grade level. Then ask them, "How does each student author make sure his new poem sounds so much like the original poem?" and "How does each author make sure his new poem has unique qualities from the original?"

From Todd Herman, our online lesson's author: "Tell students they will be writing their own apology poem. Print and show as overheads the first two pages of her book. The first overhead shows two poems, one by William Carlos Williams, the other by a member of Sidman's class, I suggest the very first poem, the one dealing with powdered doughnuts. Read these poems together as a class. The second overhead would be a response back to the writer of the poem. Read this poem together as a class. Then discuss how the poems are the same and in what ways are they different."

Step two (introducing student models of writing): In small groups, have your students read and respond to any or all of the student models that come with the online lesson. The groups should certainly talk about the **sentence fluency**, but you might also have your students talk about the **idea development** in the writing too. There are multiple samples on-line at the online version of this lesson at WritingFix.

Mom

by Keely, third grade poet

Forgive me
For sneaking downstairs
And interrupting your party

But I was starving
And the candies were...
Calling me

I didn't know what to do
So I just took them
Please forgive me



Sorry for Drinking Your Tea

by Elise, fifth grade poet

I am sorry for drinking your tea
It looked so icy, cold and delicious
I could have gone and got my own
drink

But the fridge was too far away
The first drink just sat there and called
me

I would tell you I would not do it again
But then I would just be lying
Plus you probably would have done the same





Step three (thinking and pre-writing): The interactive word game on the online lesson's student instruction page provides some pretty good suggestions for verbs in their poems. The second interactive button is a list of possible topics that students could write about. Instead of giving students free reign to begin with, you might select one topic to apologize for--like not turning in homework or an important assignment--for the whole class to write on, and then allow them to all write about any topic they have interest in. You can also let students write their poems with partners or with small groups.

Step four (revising with specific trait language): Two tools for revision are provided below. You can use one or both, depending on how much time you have to spend on this assignment. To promote response and revision to rough draft writing, attach WritingFix's Revision and Response Post-Its to your students' drafts. Make sure the students **rank** their use of the trait-specific skills on the Post-Its, which means they'll only have one "1" and one "5." Have them commit to ideas for revision based on their Post-It rankings.

<p>Sentence Fluency: Rank each skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:</p> <p>_____ My sentences mostly begin with different words.</p> <p>_____ I use a mixture of simple and complex sentences.</p> <p>_____ I use a variety of transitional words when I write.</p> <p>_____ If read aloud, you can hear a rhythm behind my sentences.</p> <p>_____ If I repeated anything, I did it for effect.</p>	<p>Idea Development: Rank each skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:</p> <p>_____ I used a balance of showing and telling.</p> <p>_____ My details try to paint a picture in the reader's head.</p> <p>_____ I took a unique approach when writing about this topic.</p> <p>_____ I stayed on topic throughout the entire writing.</p> <p>_____ My theme/message is clear to my reader.</p>
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Step five (editing for conventions): After students apply their revision ideas to their drafts and re-write neatly, require them to find an editor. If you've established a "Community of Editors" among your students, have each student exchange his/her paper with multiple peers. With yellow high-lighters in hand, each peer reads for and highlights suspected errors for just one item from the Editing Post-it. The "Community of Editors" idea is just one of dozens and dozens of inspiring ideas that is talked about in detail in the Northern Nevada Writing Project's **Going Deep with 6 Trait Language Workbook for Teachers**.

Step six (publishing for the portfolio): When they are finished revising and have second drafts, invite your students to come back to this piece once more during an upcoming writer's workshop block. Their writing might become a longer poem, a more detailed piece, or the beginning of a series of pieces about the idea they started here. Students will probably enjoy creating an illustration for this story as they get ready to publish it for their portfolios.

<p>Many Apologies by Amy, 8th grade</p> <p>I'm sorry for all the silly things I have done Burning my hand Sewing my finger Leaving toothpicks out on which dad stepped on I was young and foolish, no care in the world</p> <p>I'm sorry for all the past things that have occurred Skipping my lessons Wasting my life on the computer Breaking six plates in three days I wasn't thinking of the outcome</p> <p>For all these things I apologize For you are my mother, the one who has taught me so much Now though, I have learned from my mistakes and corrected them Allowing me to excel in my academic career and studies Once more, I am sorry for causing you any stress In the future, I hope to make it up to you</p>		<p>Pancake Thief by Connor, 8th grade</p> <p>Forgive me For stealing Your pancakes</p> <p>I sneaked over While you were gone I stole them so quickly Eating them even faster</p> <p>So warm and soft Your pancakes were Filled with butter and syrup Delicious</p>	
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A Fifth Grade Nevada “Sparkler”

A *sparkler* is not a perfect piece of writing, but it “shines” in small ways that all students can both identify and discuss. When students analyze *sparkling* techniques used by other student writers, they are more likely to try these techniques in their own drafts.

Bryan, a Nevada fifth grader, prepared for his state writing examination by composing and revising the following piece of narrative writing three months before taking his actual test. This was the first of three practice prompts Bryan’s teacher assigned him.

Read the prompt carefully. Then read Bryan’s response. Be prepared to talk about where his writing techniques *sparkle* as well as where Bryan might make the writing even better if he wrote just one more draft.



Bryan’s Practice Prompt: *Think about a time when something special or unusual happened at school. It could be a time when something unexpected happened in your classroom. Or it could be any event at school that you remember well. Write about what happened and why it was special or unusual.*

Bryan’s writing: “Changing Pencil Sharpeners”

“Hmmm...” I wondered inside my head. We were supposed to write about something unusual for this practice prompt I’m writing about now. I was about to give up on trying to get a good topic. That was until Tommy, the boy sitting in front of me, changed that.

He asked me if I wanted to trade pencil sharpeners with him. When I said no he was doing the “Awman!” expression. He started to look around for anyone who would trade with him for about three to five seconds. I wouldn’t have wanted to trade anyway. First of all I bought my easy-to-open pencil sharpener. He didn’t buy his. He looked into Andrew’s (the boy next to him) desk. I thought trouble was occurring!

I was right. Tommy secretly changed his pencil sharpener with Andrew’s! He should never have put it so close to the edge of inside his desk! But then the thing hit me. My best topic ever! I raised my hand at the last minute and said my idea. Tommy secretly exchanging pencil sharpeners with Andrew! Tommy was totally exposed! Andrew was shocked too. And this was an unusual thing that happened at school!

An interactive task for other fifth graders: Bryan worked hard to make sure both his introduction and his conclusion referred back to the prompt in an interesting way, which was a great way to improve both his **organization** and his **idea development** scores. Notice how naturally Bryan does this; he doesn’t begin with *I’m going to tell you about...* and conclude with *So now you know about...*, which rarely sounds natural. Highlight words and phrases in both the introduction and conclusion that refer back to the prompt Bryan as assigned.

Challenge: Study your brainstorm or rough draft and find a way to *naturally* refer to the prompt as you begin and end your writing.

A Fourth Grade Nevada “Sparkler”

A *sparkler* is not a perfect piece of writing, but it “shines” in small ways that all students can both identify and discuss. When students analyze *sparkling* techniques used by other student writers, they are more likely to try these techniques in their own drafts.

Kate, a Nevada fourth grader, prepared for her state writing examination by composing and revising the following piece of narrative writing nine months before having to take her test as a fifth grader. This was the first of three practice prompts Kate’s fourth grade teacher assigned her.



Read the prompt carefully. Then read Kate’s response. Be prepared to talk about where her writing techniques *sparkle* as well as where Amber might make the writing even better if she wrote just one more draft.

Kate’s Practice Prompt: *Think of something you have done that brought you satisfaction, pleasure or a sense of accomplishment. Tell a story about this activity or event.*

Kate’s writing: “The Time I Learned to Hula-hoop”

When I started learning to hula-hoop, I didn’t have my own hula-hoop. On my 8th birthday, my mom got me one. It was black with green stripes. And one day I went to Reno Art Town. They were having a Hoop Jam is what they called it. I could do only one trick and that was having one hula-hoop on my waist and one on my palm.

Then Sarah, an adult I know, showed me how to do the Figure Eight with my hula-hoop. It’s when you make a figure eight with your hula-hoop! It took me a long time to learn it. Then, she showed me the Slinky. I did that in two tries. After that, I went down to the Reno River. I taught an adult how to hula-hoop.

What was really cool is that I kept the hula-hoop on my waist for eight minutes straight on my first try!

An interactive task for other fourth graders:

Challenge:

A Seventh Grade Nevada “Sparkler”

A *sparkler* is not a perfect piece of writing, but it “shines” in small ways that all students can both identify and discuss. When students analyze *sparkling* techniques used by other student writers, they are more likely to try these techniques in their own drafts.

Madison, a Nevada seventh grader, prepared for her state writing examination by composing and revising the following piece of expository writing eight months before taking her actual test. This was the third of three practice prompts Madison’s teacher assigned her.

Read the prompt carefully. Then read Madison’s response. Be prepared to talk about where her writing techniques *sparkle* as well as where she might make the writing even better if she wrote just one more draft.

Madison’s Practice Prompt: A rainy day doesn't have to be bad. Some people like rainy days. Explain how to turn a rainy day into a good day.

Madison’s writing: “Rainy Day”



You wake up in the morning: stretch your arms, your legs, you yawn. You look out your window to find that it’s raining outside. You think to yourself that there’s nothing to do on a rainy day, but then as you climb out of bed and think, you notice that it doesn’t have to be a boring day, no... Instead you quickly get to your closet open the doors, and pull out your rain clothes and gear.

Actually, if you think about it, there are a lot of things to do on a rainy day. Well, first, if you’re all bundled up, you can go outside and just turn in circles as you let the rain fall onto your jacket and bounce onto your face. Also you can get an umbrella, go outside and do silly tricks. Another thing you could do is get your family together and have a game day, or just sit on the couch with a bowl of popcorn and watch a movie. I mean, not all rainy days have to be spent outside.

Why? Why would you do this? Well, I think that you do it for the fun of it, you know? You do it just because you’re bored. Also when it’s a rainy day, you can’t just lay around all day doing nothing. You have to get out or stay in with the family. For me, I do silly, crazy stuff on rainy days, because I am the type of person who loves rainy days. I love to do stuff in the, rain just for the fun of it. Rain is my favorite thing that comes from the sky.

At the end of the day, you fall down on your bed exhausted from all the fun you had in the rain. You think to yourself how much fun you can have on rainy days, and how much you can’t wait for another.

An interactive task for other seventh graders: Madison takes a big risk here, beginning and ending with narrative (story-telling) writing techniques for what should be an expository writing task; fortunately for her, she makes sure she spends the majority of her time explaining her ideas, not simply describing the rainy day like she’s telling a story. Focus on the explanations she provides in the middle paragraphs. Find two or three places where she adds memorable and specific details to deepen an explanation. It does help your score to include details in your writing, as long as you’re sure you’re using them as part of your explanation. Be careful not to over-narrate.

Your challenge: Look at the memorable details you included in your response to the prompt. Are they part of story-telling, or are they part of an explanation? Have a friend check to make sure.

A Seventh Grade Nevada “Sparkler”

A *sparkler* is not a perfect piece of writing, but it “shines” in small ways that all students can both identify and discuss. When students analyze *sparkling* techniques used by other student writers, they are more likely to try these techniques in their own drafts.

Brian, a Nevada seventh grader, prepared for his state writing examination by composing and revising the following piece of expository writing eight months before taking his actual test. This was the third of three practice prompts Brian’s teacher assigned him.

Read the prompt carefully. Then read Brian’s response. Be prepared to talk about where his writing techniques *sparkle* as well as where he might make the writing even better if he wrote just one more draft.

Brian’s Practice Prompt: A rainy day doesn't have to be bad. Some people like rainy days. Explain how to turn a rainy day into a good day.



Brian’s writing: “Don’t Be Bored”

“Pitter, patter, pitter, patter.” As the rain falls, most people start to have a bad day. Some, though, know the secrets to having a good day. After extensive research, I have come up with three proven methods on how to have a good rainy day. One of which is to play board games. Another is to read a good book. Lastly, you could go to a friend’s house.

The first way would be to play board games. One of the many out there is Scrabble. This particular board game requires brain power, distracting you from the depressing rain outside. Another type of board game is a puzzle. Puzzles can take quite a while. This is a great use of time.

Another way to distract you from the rain outside is to read. Reading can make a rainy day seem less glummy. It can also take your mind off of the rain.

The final way to turn a rainy day inside out is to go to a friend’s house. There is so much you can do at a friend’s house. It also makes a rainy day less boring.

Many people think that a rainy day is boring. Well, that’s not true when you know the secrets. Just keep your mind open to ideas, and you will never be bored on a rainy day again.

An interactive task for other seventh graders:

Your challenge:

My Room

by Brandon K., eleventh grade

I enter my room. No silence here. It is an area void of any order or neatness. I know only by faith that the floor is even there, hidden beneath mounds of dirty and clean clothes. The walls, invisible under posters and pictures, souvenirs and snapshots, haven't seen the light of day in years.

I take a step further in, being careful to avoid what could be

hiding under the mounds of stuff that buries my floor. The stereo is booming beside my bed, which is unmade. This is a room of beautiful disorder. All four walls are one big collage.



Abandoned House

by Bridget V., eleventh grade

Dark and unlively, here it stands. It was once full of life, but now only sorrow lurks around every corner.

The smell of a home cooked dinner is no more. Laughter of small children has faded away. No light brightens the rooms. And the fresh flowers that bloomed with life have shriveled up and died.

This house has no life...at least not anymore. The floors creaked with one step. Dust lies everywhere. Cobwebs settle in the corners of the rooms. The furniture has been covered up to not be seen at all. Silver candle holders have droplets of wax covering all over until finally settling on the wooden surface.

You think you hear the happy laughter of children, but all you see is an empty hall leading to empty rooms.

All that stands in this house are the fresh tears and blackness of a broken heart.



Raven's Hollow

by Ben C., eleventh grade

Forgotten away behind ancient black iron gates near a rocky ocean shore lies the small village that has come to be known as Raven's Hollow. Here, you will not find the laughter of children, nor the song of a morning bird in the bright sun, or the noises of livestock scampering through the streets. There are no church bells tolling, no people working, and no newborn babes crying for their mother's protection.

Here you will only find the deathly shrill of a black raven before it takes up its flight. The echo of empty inns and homes, the crash of window shutters in disrepair, the tasks of former residents left undone or untouched. A thick suffocating fog fills the silent forest bordering the forest's edge and waits for the next of tourists to wander into its dark history.

Forgotten away behind ancient black iron gates near a rocky ocean shore lies the small village that has come to be known as Raven's Hollow.



What's ***Voice***? It might be:




- ☐ Humor
- ☐ Emotion
- ☐ Passion
- ☐ Mood & Tone
- ☐ Persuasion
- ☐ Point-of-view
- ☐ Devices that add style

Your Olympic-Committee Task:

1. Read all three pieces carefully;
2. Award a gold, silver, and bronze medal for *Voice*, and gold, silver, and bronze medal for *Sentence Fluency*.
3. Compare your medals choices with others, discussing any differences of opinions.

What's ***Sentence Fluency***? Perhaps:

- ☐ Varied Sentence Lengths
- ☐ Varied Sentence Beginnings
- ☐ Rhythm
- ☐ Flow of words
- ☐ Natural-sounding use of transitions

Mrs. Hartzell's wonderful first graders used <u>The Important Book</u> to inspire important passages about their own lives.		
<p>The most important thing about me is I am inventive. I can help you have more fun in your life. I will make true friends with you. I will answer your difficult questions. But the most important thing about me is I am inventive.</p>	<p>The most important thing about the world is we live in it. It has dark green trees. It has grey pipes that run underground. It has happy teachers that teach children to read and write. But the most important thing about the world is we live in it.</p>	<p>The most important thing about Mom is she cooks us dinner. She feeds our starving dogs. She pays her cable, electric and food bills. She takes us on walks to the park. But the most important thing about Mom is she cooks us dinner.</p>
		
Sydney, 1 st grade writer	Pablo, 1 st grade writer	Mikey, 1 st grade writer

These samples were inspired by the “Using 90th Street’s Advice” lesson at WritingFix, which was inspired by the mentor text Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street by Roni Schotter.



The Fire

by Sunny, sixth grade writer

He bravely fought fire all his life, but today was different. He cautiously stepped into the burning apartment building in the middle of New York City. He knew that this building could topple at any moment. But this was his job, to save innocent people, even if it meant risking his own life for another.

As he approached the first door, a gust of heat blew ash into his face and stung his eyes. His crimson-red hat gleamed on top of his dark, oily hair. His huge hands were curled into hard fists, trembling violently...he was terrified. Outside he heard cars honking, breaking the silence of the night. The fire licked dangerously at his face as he made his way through the burning building.

Suddenly, he heard something, or someone! He followed the sound to another hallway. “Is the person I’m looking for behind this door?” he asked himself.

Person/Character: a firefighter

Place/Setting: an apartment building

Thing: a fire



Real or Dream?

by Nikola, sixth grade writer

He arose on a bright luminous morning astounded by where he had awakened. The only thing that he could recall was that his name was Secret Agent Double 08. He reached his filthy, dirty hands deep into his pocket and discovered two things: a note and a pocket knife. The note read,

*Tomorrow morning this island will sink,
so act fast and don't forget to think!*

So Agent Double 08 immediately got to work on planning his escape. There was only one tree on the entire island and no room for mistakes because this would be the only material he could use to make an escape. He decided to create a boat out of the tree, using his pocket knife, that would withstand the sweep of each treacherous wave surrounding the island.

When done making the boat, he left right away before the island sank and left him to drown. After getting about twenty yards away from shore, Agent Double 08 had realized he failed! His boat had already started to fill up with water, and if he went any further it would sink. He jumped out and swam all the way back to the island and fell into a dark sleep. What if Agent Double 08 drowned in his sleep? Or what if the Secret Agent Double 08 had been dreaming this whole time?

Person/Character: a secret agent

Place/Setting: an island

Thing: a pocket knife



The Magical Orange Shoes

by Elliane, sixth grade writer

Dan was in trouble. AGAIN! His new white scrubs were stained with the red dust of Mars, his fingers numb from the cold. But worst of all, the lime green alien was about to die!

“Are you sure you can save me?” asked the alien lying on the silver gurney.

“Of course. I’m a doctor, after all,” replied Dan with the utmost confidence. But he wasn’t sure. And then it came to him. “Those orange shoes,” he whispered to himself. “The magical, orange shoes!” Faster than an airplane and slicker than silver, they were just the magic he needed. Dan quickly pulled the shoes from his backpack and, as he did, they kicked and fluttered their wings with all their might. But Dan was stronger; he placed the shoes in a stronghold and moved outside. He took a sharp red Mars rock and cut the magical orange shoes into tiny little pieces. He forced the alien to eat the tiny little pieces, hoping they would let him live longer.

The slimy, green alien coughed and chewed and swallowed over and over again. After what seemed like hours--but was really only a matter of minutes--the alien ate the last bite. Nothing seemed to happen. “What if the orange shoes don’t work?” thought Dan.

Person/Character: a doctor

Place/Setting: Mars

Thing: orange shoes

Writer's Name: Joey

Three Organized Paragraphs about a Scientific Mishap

Inspired by Dogzilla by Dav Pilkey

Instructions: Today you will be writing a three-paragraph story about the results of an accident in a scientific lab that you will invent in your brain and then capture on paper. First, you will describe the scientific accident happening. Then you will describe a human character entering and discovering the accident. Finally, the accident will surround your character, and your character will be transformed into something new and weird.

The word game on the Dogzilla page at WritingFix will help you come up with the creature whose creation your story will be about. When dog meets Godzilla in a scientific lab, the result is Dogzilla! When Man meets mosquito in a scientific lab, the result is Mansquito. Play the game at WritingFix, or create your own original creature, and write its name in the box below.

Then compose an organized, three-paragraph story about the creation of your creature in a scientific lab. A good paragraph contains many sentences about the same idea, and it makes use of great words. Write your paragraphs in the boxes below, and use the suggestions to help keep your paragraph focused.

My new creature's name:

Manaconda

Rough draft your first paragraph below. Use additional paper if necessary.

Hey! Use some powerful adjectives in this paragraph!

"Wh-what is happening?" I felt the floor shaking violently as I fought to keep my balance. "Not another earthquake!!" I began to panic as I heard several loud crashes. I ran to the lab on shaky legs, while the test tubes filled with their precious liquid, splattered upon the floor. Weird purplish gasses floated up from the floor where the fluids had combined.



Your first paragraph will launch your reader into the action that begins the scientific mishap. In five or six (perhaps more) sentences, you will describe what is happening in the lab as the accident happens. Is the machinery malfunctioning? Are some chemicals reacting badly? Describe the accident.

Rough draft your second paragraph below. Use additional paper if necessary.

Hey! Use some emotion words in this paragraph!

"All my years of work and research on a new anti-aging lotion have been ruined!" "How will I ever be able to meet my deadline now?" I dropped to my knees with my head in my hands, not noticing that some of the animal test subjects had escaped their cages. The mighty anaconda silently slithered up to me through the various chemicals. Startled, I reached over to pick him up, and that's when it happened...

Your second paragraph needs to describe your human character's reaction as he or she discovers the accident happening in the lab.

Rough draft your third paragraph below. Use additional paper if necessary.

Hey! Use some powerful verbs in this paragraph!

"Arrrrgh!" The anaconda, frightened by what had happened, bit me on the hand. I pulled away sharply and dropped the snake into a puddle of the steaming purple goo. I looked down to find that some of the goo had splashed onto my snake bite. I instantly began to feel dizzy and nauseous. I shook my head to try lift the fogginess that was engulfing my brain. I felt a creepy tickle in my mouth and opened it. Out shot a long, red forked tongue. Confused, I began to look around at my body. My legs and arms were slowly becoming covered in moist snake scales. I tried to scream, but all that came out was a long hiss. My thoughts were racing! "I-I am becoming a half man/half snake. A manaconda!!"


In your third paragraph, your character will physically encounter the accident that is happening, and he or she react to the encounter. The accident will transform him or her into the new creature. Describe the transformation with details.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements


- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision



Talking about & Modeling Revision:
Three of the Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

Corbett Harrison (<http://corbettharrison.com>)
 Northern Nevada Writing Project (<http://nnwp.org>)
 Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (<http://nwrpd.com>)
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Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?




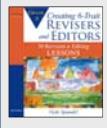
Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

- Fact:** When writing lessons run long (which they always do), the most common step of the writing process that gets "short-changed" is revision.
- Fact:** I honestly think most teachers know the difference between revising and editing, but the distinctions tend to become muddled over time after repeatedly skipping over revision completely or after repeatedly combining revising and editing into one step.
- Fact:** More than any other step of the writing process, revision—when taught well—helps foster critical thinking from our students.
- Fact:** Editing, on its very best day, teaches application (Bloom's level). Revision, on its very best day, teaches analysis and evaluation (Bloom's levels).
- Fact:** Teaching revision well takes diligence and skills of differentiation, and it's hard work. There are "gimmicks" we teach kids (start with a question or a sound effect, change all your *said*s to better verbs, force a simile into your writing with a crowbar), but these tricks aren't designed to take students to the topmost levels of Bloom's thinking; they're designed to make revision seem easier than it actually is.
- Fact:** When I talk about improving revision, I talk exclusively about helping students critically think and collaborate to make individualized revision plans.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

"Traditionally, we have not really *taught* revision, but only *assigned* it: 'Revise this for Monday.' Students who do not understand revision or do not know specific strategies to apply often wind up writing a longer draft, making it neater, or correcting conventional errors. This is not true revision. Revision is re-seeing, re-thinking text, and making internal changes that affect message, voice, and readability.

"The six traits make it possible for us to actually teach revision. But to do so effectively, we have to make revision visible."

—Vicki Spandel

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

after THE END
Teaching and Learning Center Review
Barry Lane

REVISER'S TOOLBOX
Barry Lane

"The question most asked by teachers in my in-service training workshops: 'I can get them to write, but how do I get them to revise?'"

The question always disturbs me because it implies that a teacher must coerce a child into revision, whereas writing comes naturally."

--Barry Lane

Barry jokes that his seven-step process looks like:

1. Revise
2. Revise
3. Revise
4. Revise
5. Revise
6. Revise
7. Revise

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

The Northern Nevada Writing Project's *Going Deep with 6 Trait Language*

How can I help my students revise their writing with a focus on revision?

Also Development
Characteristics
How to do it
Voice
Sentence Fluency
Conventions

Other than saying, "Separate your revision time from your editing time," I don't spend too much time on the trait of conventions in this particular workshop.

I will take a moment to share with you one of the best "ah-ha moments" I ever had when it came to teaching conventions and editing to my students.

It's called the "Community of Editors," and you can find the write-up I did for it on page 183 of your *Going Deep with 6 Trait Language* Guide.

Before you look in the guide, let me take you through a quick overview of how you set up such a community.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Our Community of Editors:

Spelling Checkers: Name Name
Grammar Checkers: Name Name Name
Internal Punctuation Checkers: Name Name
End Punctuation Checkers: Name Name
Dialogue Punctuation Checkers: Name

On my "Community of Editors" day...

- Each student brings a revised draft;
- I have highlighters for all students;
- Each student is required to have four other students edit his/her paper; the four students must come from four different quadrants on the poster; students do not need to have find an editor for the quadrant on the poster where their own name sits.
- Editors look only for possible errors in what they have been assigned to look for (for example, "spelling.")
- Editors highlight all errors and suspected errors. I also have them initial their highlights (in the margin) in case there is a question later.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers


The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision
Let me have you read and discuss one of the chapters from this book. The chapter is called "Eating the World," and it's on page 71 of the book.

Two Discussion Questions:

- How might students relate to the content? Or...What might they be inspired to write about that's somehow similar to this chapter's topic?
- What specific writing skills do you see Ralph use well in this chapter? Use the *Going Deep with 6 Trait Language* Guide to help you name the skills, if you're having trouble.



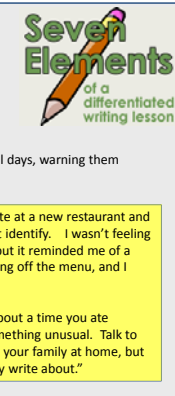
Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision

1. Ask students to think about an assigned topic for several days, warning them they'll do some writing about the topic soon.

Say to your students on Monday: "Over the weekend, I ate at a new restaurant and there were all sorts of weird things on the menu I couldn't identify. I wasn't feeling particularly brave so I didn't order anything too unusual, but it reminded me of a time I was with my father and he ordered the weirdest thing off the menu, and I watched him eat it, and I couldn't believe he was doing it."

"I've decided in a few days I am going to have you write about a time you ate something unusual, or you watched someone else eat something unusual. Talk to your friends about this topic at recess, maybe even talk to your family at home, but come in on Wednesday with something you can personally write about."



Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

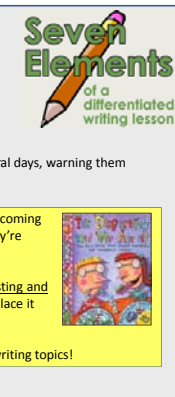
My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision

1a. Ask students to think about an assigned topic for several days, warning them they'll do some writing about the topic soon.

Optional Idea for Tuesday: To keep thinking about the upcoming topic "alive," it's okay to keep reminding students that they're supposed to be thinking about a topic.

With this one, I could see bringing out the book *It's Disgusting and We Ate It* by James Solheim. Read from the book or just place it in your chalk tray, drawing your students' attention to it.

Students need to be reminded to think about upcoming writing topics!



The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers


Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision

2. A few days later, have students do some rough draft writing on the topic; put their writing away for a few days.

On Wednesday: Write the topic--"Eating Unusual Things"--where all students can see it. Tell students they will have ten or fifteen minutes to write between five and ten sentences about a time they (or a witnessed family member or friend) ate something unusual. They need to try and explain what happened so that someone who wasn't there could picture the scene in their mind.

Allow for ten minutes of sacred writing time, which means quiet writing time. A few of your students will write a page of words, but you most likely will have more students who write five or six sentences that tell a pretty basic story.



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson


Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision

3. Create a teacher model of some rough draft writing for the same topic; make the teacher model pretty typical of the kind of writing your students will do.

On Friday or Monday: Share the rough draft you created . I always like to say, "I'm not finished yet, but I'm determined to make it really good. Maybe you guys can help me."

Once my Dad ordered menudo at our favorite restaurant. Menudo is soup that has some pretty weird stuff in it. There was even a pig's foot floating in his soup. There was also another kind of meat that he said was a cow's stomach. He ate it and thought it was great. I didn't even want to taste it.



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?


My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision

4. Share from a mentor text, preferably one that is reminiscent of the prompt/topic you wrote to. With your students, analyze the mentor text, looking for skills the writer used to make the writing high quality.

On the Same Friday or Monday...or a day later: Now it's time for the "craft" mentor text. Read it...Enjoy it...Re-read it and begin analyzing it to make a list of two or three skills the author used really well. It would be wise for you, as teacher, to have a list of skills pre-determined, but be prepared to accept skills your students spot and like.

With the "Eating the World" chapter, I am always impressed with Fletcher's:

- Strong verb usage (word choice)
- Inserts of dialogue (voice)



Seven Elements
of a differentiated writing lesson

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision

5. In front of your students, revise your teacher model, finding places to incorporate the skills you analyzed in the mentor text. Have your students help you do this to your model; they appreciate being asked for input.

On the Same Friday or Monday...or a day later: Be prepared to share and celebrate individual sentences from the mentor text that demonstrate the skills. Begin showing students how individual sentences can inspire revisions in your model.

For example, I really like this two-verb sentence from *Eating the World*: "One morning Tommy *wandered* away from our house and *walked* down Acorn Street."

It inspires me to rethink my introduction: *One afternoon my family climbed out of the car and entered our favorite Mexican food restaurant...or...One afternoon at a restaurant my father put down his menu and announced that he was ordering menudo.* You can have students help you decide which makes the better intro.

Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

My 6-Step Technique for Teaching Authentic Revision

5a. In front of your students, *continue* to revise your teacher model, finding places to incorporate the skills you analyzed in the mentor text. Look at how my revised draft makes use of better verbs and dialogue snippets.

One afternoon at a restaurant my father put down his menu and announced that he was ordering menudo.

"What's that?" I asked, looking for it in my menu.

Dad pointed and I read what it said. It didn't sound so bad. The menu called it a traditional Mexican soup in a spicy broth.

When it came though, I was horrified. There was a pig's foot floating in the reddish broth. There was also something in there that looked like a piece of coral.

When I asked what that was, my Dad replied, "Tripe." It turns out that tripe is cow's stomach. My father gobbled it down and thought it was delicious.

I refused to taste it even though he offered to let me. It made me so sick that I almost couldn't finish my tacos.

6. Now have students apply the analyzed skills to their own writing. Have students discuss how their writing changed while they revise and after they've revised.

Bizarre Foods
by Oswaldo, fifth grade writer

Once I was watching a perplexing show called *Bizarre Foods*, and saw a creepy guy eat something I would have never expected.

Snake soup! I saw them kill the slimy, slithering snake, and then I saw the cruel chefs put the dead snake to boil.

It was sickening to watch when I saw them prepare the gut-wrenching meal, adding more ingredients. But it was much more disgusting when I saw some bizarre people actually scarfing down the concoction.

If it wasn't on TV, I would've have puked. "Let's make some!" joked my cousin, seeing how disgusted I was. I would sooner taste dirt before eating something as gruesome as snake soup.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

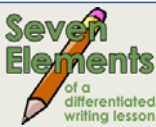
Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

Remember, I believe in choice for student writers:
In a great classroom, students are taught to make good choices about the writing process as well as their writing topics.

Name: _____

Which two traits will I revise for?

Trait 1: _____	Trait 2: _____
List your strategies for revising this trait:	List your strategies for revising this trait:

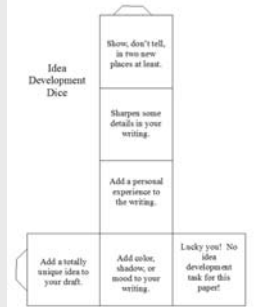


In my class, all students had to commit to revising for two traits on their portfolio pieces. They also had to write out several trait-inspired strategies before they began revising.

They chose one trait. I chose the other.

This worked incredibly well for me and them.

On the next few slides, you'll see six of the "revision tools" I created to help them arrive at a place where they could make good choices about choosing a revision trait.



Revision Strategy #1: Revision Dice


Create a set of trait- and skill-inspired revision dice.

You can create a dice template and actually put the words on real dice.

Or you can type a dice key on paper and have students roll normal dice:

- 1 = show, don't tell in two new places
- 2 = sharpen some details in your writing
- Etc.

On revision day, students roll dice to give them ideas for revision strategies that would work with their rough drafts.



Revision Strategy #2: Revision Post-its

Create a set of age-appropriate, trait-inspired Post-it Notes for your students.


This is the set I generally use with grades 4-12.

On revision day, students select one, two, or three Post-its (differentiate!) to rank their skills in their rough drafts.

Students can rank their own writing as well as rank the writing of students in a response group.

Students use rankings to determine one, two, or three revision strategies for their rough drafts.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers



**Revision Strategy #3:
Revision Metaphor Cards**

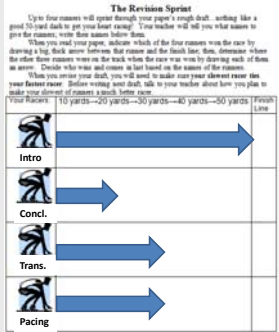
Create several examples of "metaphor cards" for revision.

Tell students, "This picture represents something that a reviser (not an editor) does to make the writing better. What do you think the picture is suggesting you do to your draft?"

Keep a key of "right" answers, but have a place where creative other answers can be recorded and saved.

Have students locate pictures of metaphors that could be added to the class deck.

On revision day, students draw, discuss, and trade cards to end up with a revision strategy that works for them.



**Revision Strategy #4:
The Revision Sprint**


This is inspired by the Horserace of Criteria activity from Barry Lane's Reviser's Toolbox.

On revision day, students imagine that four runners will dash through their rough draft. The runners are named after traits or trait skills.

Students decide which "runner" ran the best race in the draft and mark their choice as such.

Students, then, decide where the other three runners were when the winner crossed the "finish line."

As a revision plan, students must figure out how to make (at least) one of the slower runners tie the front runner.



**Revision Strategy #5:
Revision Board Games**

Create a teacher model of a board game that, when played, gives a writer a series of revision strategies. There are good teacher models pre-made and posted at [WritingFix's Revision Homepage](http://WritingFix.com).

Students work in groups to create an original board game based on revision skills they have learned about.

Groups exchange board games.

Groups play for fifteen minutes on revision day, and each writer creates a list of strategies they will use while working with their current rough draft.

The Seven Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson Workshop for Teachers

Appetizers
Subtle Alliteration Sashimi - Nothing else prepares your palette for a perfectly prepared main course. Add a change, words to make your descriptions delicious!

Sentence Variety Salad - A variety of greens, both long and small, gives one a healthy crunch! If your class needs "spice," try varying sentence lengths and beginnings.

Prepositional Phrase Sticks - An appetizer you can use during your dinner, or, during your dinner, maybe something delectable and delightful! Find places to "stick" your prepositional phrase to the beginning of your sentence.

Desserts
Tuxedo Cake Thoughts - Elegant and introspective, this is a perfect complement to the end of a meal! If you feel stuck, within your story, add a few thoughts to get it moving.

Engage a Moment Brainic Wagon - Close your eyes and imagine yourself there, wait for words to come.

Bimolecular Banana Foster - You will never remember having a better dessert. Find a place in your story where you can show it, or not.

**Revision Strategy #6:
Revision Restaurant Menus**

As a whole class, create a on-going list of revision strategies for the first half of the year.

Tell students they will be working together to open a "Revision Restaurant" for the second half of the school year. Students work in groups to create the restaurant's menus, which will have three sections: appetizers, main courses, and desserts.

Revision strategies must be turned into "menu items," which pretend the strategies are food but give the writer a solid strategy to try if the item is "ordered."

When students use finished menus, they choose one appetizer, one main course, and one dessert item.

Teacher-made models are at WritingFix!

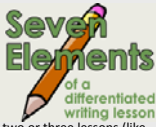
Essential Questions: What's the difference between *revising* and *editing*? How can convince our student writers that single-drafts rarely yields one's best writing for class? How do we motivate for revision?

Suggestion #1 for Teaching Revision: Start early on. If you have two or three lessons (like the *Marshfield Dreams* lesson) ready to do in the first—let's say—nine weeks of school, the skills picked up in those experiences can be built on throughout the school year.

Suggestion #2 for Teaching Revision: Teach it slow. A student has to like the writing he/she is doing to learn anything about true revision. As suggested in the *Marshfield Dreams* lesson, give them time to "own" the topic, time to struggle with a rough draft, and then put plenty of space between the struggle and the invitation to revise.

Suggestion #3 for Teaching Revision: Make it fun and make it collaborative! The six strategies I have shown you are designed to help students think about revision skills while interacting with each other and while doing something fun.

Suggestion #4 for Teaching Revision: Shoot for the top two levels of Bloom's! If you set the expectation for them to analyze and evaluate, they will rise to your expectation. It's when we don't set a high bar for revision that we get recopied rough drafts.



The 7 Elements of a Differentiated Writing Lesson

The Seven Elements

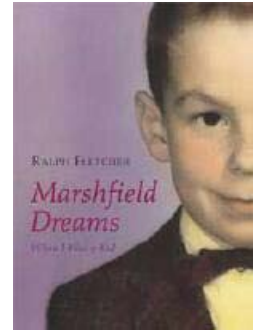
- Skill/Trait Focus
- Mentor Text
- Graphic Organizer
- Student Choice
- Teacher/Student Writing Models
- Students Talk about Process
- Real Revision

Talking about & Modeling Revision:
a personal goal for these three elements might have you...

- Locate several craft mentor texts and design several revision lessons that teach students to try out the skills used in those mentor texts;
- Design your own versions of dice, post-its, or some other tool that will help your students learn and remember the skills that revisers know how to do;
- Establish a community of editors and keep it separated from the community of revisers you set up.
- Or...?

Revision Lesson: Bizarre Foods with Ralph Fletcher

Mentor Text: Marshfield Dreams: When I Was a Kid by Ralph Fletcher



Brainstorming Topics to Write about: At least a day before writing, tell students they will need to think about strange things they have personally eaten or that they've watched friends or family eat. Perhaps you could tell them a personal story on this topic from your own past. My Dad, for example, loved to eat beef tongue sandwiches, and I'll never forget the morning his farmer friend--who'd just had a cow butchered--brought him a very fresh, raw tongue in a grocery bag, which he popped down on the kitchen counter where I was eating my breakfast. When we ate the tongue for dinner that night, I had a hard time enjoying it because all I could think about was the blood-soaked bag next to my bowl of Cheerios.

Challenge students to talk about the topic over recess or to even talk about it with their families as homework.

Drafting the "Seed" Idea: Write the topic--"Eating Unusual Things"--where all students can see it. Tell students they will have ten or fifteen minutes to write between five and ten sentences about a time they (or a witnessed family member or friend) ate something unusual. They need to try and explain what happened so that someone who wasn't there could picture the scene in their mind.

Allow for ten minutes of sacred writing time, which means quiet writing time. A few of your students will write a page of words, but you most likely will have more students who write five or six sentences.

Here is a typical writing sample from this prompt (minus conventional errors) that we use when modeling the craft lesson:

Once my Dad ordered menudo at our favorite restaurant. Menudo is soup that has some pretty weird stuff in it. There was a pig's foot floating in his soup. There was also another kind of meat that he said was a cow's stomach. He ate it and thought it was great. I didn't even want to taste it.

Consider putting the writing away for a day so that those who struggled to write have some time to recover from their struggle.

Inspiring Revision through the Mentor Text: Tell students they will be revising their "Eating Unusual Things" writing, but first they will listen to how a really famous author wrote to that idea. The chapter called "Eating the World" in Ralph Fletcher's Marshfield Dreams should be Xeroxed and handed out to your students to read and analyze.

Enjoy the text aloud without stopping. Ask students to remember favorite details from the text.

Ask students to work with a partner and to analyze two things from Fletcher's chapter: 1) his use of interesting verbs; and 2) his use of dialogue.

Create a class list of interesting verbs from the text that imply the verb *to eat*: munched, gobbled, chewed, swallowed, nibbled, tasted, etc. Then have students brainstorm other verbs that are synonyms for eating. Add to the class list.

Next, have students look closely at Fletcher's dialogue, which adds much voice to the chapter. Fletcher is very good at using tag line verbs (*said*, *replied*, *asked*, etc.) but he is also really skilled at adding other actions to the descriptions that accompany the bits of dialogue. Have students really focus on the examples where instead of a tag line verb, Fletcher gives us a different action ("Ugh!" I wanted to throw up just listening to the description) and the examples where he adds an additional verb to his dialogue tag lines ("That's the stupidest excuse I've ever heard," Jimmy said, rolling his eyes.)

Tell students you want them to start from scratch and re-tell their unusual food stories, using inspirational craft skills from Ralph Fletcher. They must, in fact, pretend Ralph Fletcher is going to be in their response groups after they rewrite, and they have to predict which of their sentences they think Ralph would like the best.

Authentic Revision: If students are stuck with how to begin their new first sentences, keep re-reading this sentence from Ralph Fletcher's chapter, challenging them to mimic the sentence's style, structure, and use of double verbs:

One morning Tommy *wandered* away from our house and *walked* down Acorn Street.

You might model the possibilities to help them get started.

One afternoon my family climbed out of the car and entered our favorite Mexican food restaurant.

or...

One afternoon at a restaurant my father put down his menu and announced that he was ordering menudo.

As they begin to create more sentences in their stories, remind them to not only reference the class's list of eating verbs but also to think hard about the other verbs they are using in their stories.

I know there are some students who "outlaw" the use of *to be* verbs and the verb *to say*. I don't. I think those are verbs that real writers use, but they use them in balance with strong verbs. The only verb I have ever "outlawed" is the verb *to get*.

Remind students to find a good place to use some dialogue, and refer them back to Ralph's dialogue sentences that do interesting things with verbs.

At some point, show them an improved version of the original model. If you show this before they write or while they are writing, it might further inspire them.

One afternoon at a restaurant my father put down his menu and announced that he was ordering menudo.

"What's that?" I asked, looking for it in my menu.

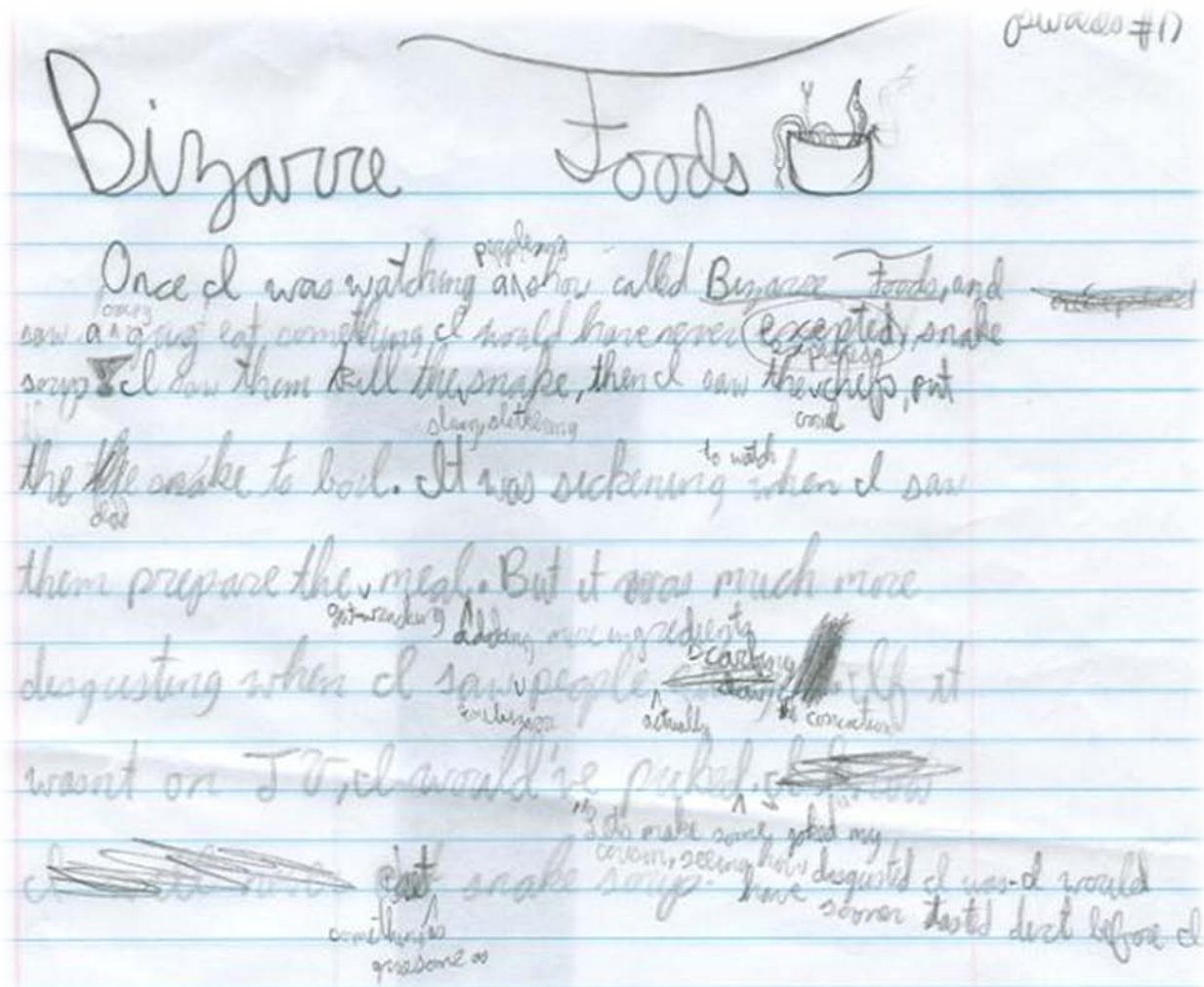
Dad pointed and I read what it said. It didn't sound so bad. The menu called it a traditional Mexican soup in a spicy broth.

When it came though, I was horrified. There was a pig's foot floating in the reddish broth. There was also something in there that looked like a piece of coral.

When I asked what that was, my Dad replied, "Tripe." It turns out that tripe is cow's stomach. My father gobbled it down and thought it was delicious.

I refused to taste it even though he offered to let me. It made me so sick that I almost couldn't finish my tacos.

Extend the Learning: Assign a few more quick prompts to your students over the next week or two. This time, before students start writing, remind them of Ralph Fletcher's two *craft tricks*: verbs and good use of dialogue snippets. Challenge them to use those tricks in their first drafts so they can try some new craft tricks during revision time.



Bizarre Foods

by Oswaldo, fifth grade writer and reviser

Once I was watching a perplexing show called *Bizarre Foods*, and saw a creepy guy eat something I would have never expected. Snake soup! I saw them kill the slimy, slithering snake, and then I saw the cruel chefs put the dead snake to boil.

It was sickening to watch when I saw them prepare the gut-wrenching meal, adding more ingredients. But it was much more disgusting when I saw some bizarre people actually scarfing down the concoction.

If it wasn't on TV, I would've have puked. "Let's make some!" joked my cousin, seeing how disgusted I was. I would sooner taste dirt before eating something as gruesome as snake soup.



Simple Trait Contract

Between “sloppy copy” and “second copy,” require a 30-second conference. Let the student know you will be assessing his/her revision on two traits: one of his/her choice, one of your choice. Before beginning revision, the student must explain how he/she will revise for both.

The two traits I will use to revise:

<p>This is the trait I chose:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>This is how I will make this trait better when I revise my writing during workshop:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>This is the trait my teacher chose:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>This is how I will make this trait better when I revise my writing during workshop:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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My original revision dice

My original revision dice			
<p style="text-align: center;">Idea Development Dice</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">Organization Dice</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> </div>
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Show, don't tell, in two new places at least.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Sharpen some details in your writing.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Add a personal experience to the writing.</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Revise your introduction.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Use more varied transition words.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Revise your conclusion.</div>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Add a totally unique idea to your draft.</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Add color, shadow, or mood to your writing.</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Lucky you! No idea development task for this paper!</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Speed up your slowest moment.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Slow down your fastest moment.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Lucky you! No organization revision task for this paper!</div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Voice Dice (with word choice and sentence fluency)</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black; margin: 2px;"></div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">Blank Dice (to make your own)</p>	
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Add some excellent adjectives that sound like you.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Add some excellent verbs that sound like you.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Vary your sentence lengths from long to short.</div>		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Read your text aloud. Revise so it sounds better when shared aloud.</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Vary your sentence beginnings so that you're using different words.</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;"></div>	
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 2px;">Lucky you! No voice revision task for this paper!</div>		

Idea Development:

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- ___ I used a balance of showing and telling.
- ___ My details try to paint a picture in the reader's head.
- ___ I took a unique approach when writing about this topic.
- ___ I stayed on topic throughout the entire writing.
- ___ My theme/message is clear to my reader.

Organization

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- ___ My introduction grabs the reader's attention.
- ___ My conclusion links back to my introduction.
- ___ I used transition words to move from idea to idea.
- ___ My paragraphs show where my sub-topics begin & end.
- ___ My title stands for my entire draft, not just a part of it.

Voice

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- ___ I really tried to show passion about my topic.
- ___ If read aloud, it sounds like something I might really say.
- ___ I did things in my writing to help my audience understand.
- ___ I captured a tone or mood with my words.
- ___ My use of humor or sarcasm is appropriate for this assignment.

Word Choice

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- ___ My adjectives are excellent and thoughtful.
- ___ I use a good balance of action and linking verbs.
- ___ My nouns are precise; I don't overuse pronouns.
- ___ It is clear that I am not afraid to take risks with new words.
- ___ I used a few color and texture words to describe.

Sentence Fluency:

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- ___ My sentences mostly begin with different words.
- ___ I use a mixture of simple and complex sentences.
- ___ I use a variety of transitional words when I write.
- ___ If read aloud, you can hear a rhythm behind my sentences.
- ___ If I repeated anything, I did it for effect.

Conventions:

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- ___ My spelling was looked over by _____.
- ___ My "end punctuation" was looked over by _____.
- ___ My commas and apostrophes were looked over by _____.
- ___ My capitalization was looked over by _____.
- ___ My grammar was looked over by _____.

“Metaphor Card” Revisions, the key:

This idea borrowed from Dr. Kathleen Boardman, NNWP Consultant

If you choose this metaphor...	...you need to try to...	...or what else might it mean for revision?
Photograph/Snapshot	Add a “snapshot” to your writing by zooming in on your subject, adding more particular “physical detail” in your sentences.	
Popcorn	Explode a passage by scattering its details all over the page.	
Dried apricot	Shrink a passage by compressing time; look for boring parts in the story or essay, and shrink them to a sentence or two.	
Raisins	Be raisin’ some questions about contents of your draft. Write down the questions you have. Attempt to answer one or more.	
Peanuts	Add a nutty passage to your draft.	
Editorial page	Change genres. If it was a poem, try to say it as an editorial or an essay. If it was a narrative, try it as a recipe script. Think of all the genres out there!	
Mirror	Write a dialogue with yourself about your topic. OR “Makeup” some dialogue to insert in your draft.	
Cloves or chiles	Spice up a passage with more description or some language play.	
Candle	“Lighten up” a serious draft with some humor, wordplay, or fun. OR make a light and breezy draft into a serious piece of writing.	
Garlic	Stink up your writing by writing it as awful as you can.	
Rubber band	Choose a passage and expand it.	
Dog leash	Try a new “lead” for your paper. Try several, if you have time.	
Paintbrush	“Tint” a description or passage in your draft with color, shadow, or mood.	
Silverware	Add something interesting about your “setting.”	
Action Figure	Add a “little character” to your writing by sharpening up your people details.	

Revision idea:



Photograph

Revision idea:



Popcorn

Revision idea:



Dried Apricots

Revision idea:



Raisins

Revision idea:



Peanuts

Revision idea:

Dear Mr. Editor...

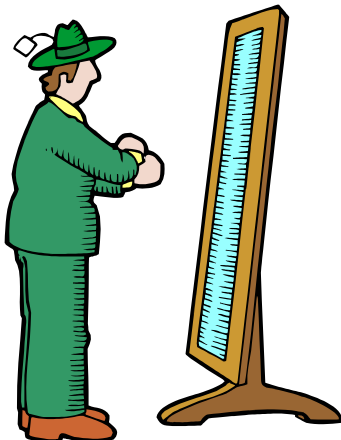
*Perhaps you are unaware that
each year thousands of unsuspecting
people fall victim to...*

Sincerely,

Editorial Page

Revision idea:

Revision idea:

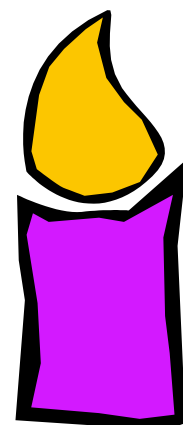


Mirror

Revision idea:



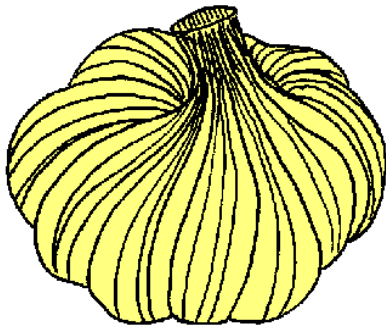
Cloves or chiles



Candle

(Xerox these cards, cut them out, place in plastic baggies)

Revision idea:



Garlic

Revision idea:



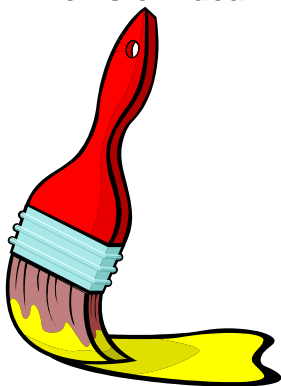
Rubber Band

Revision idea:



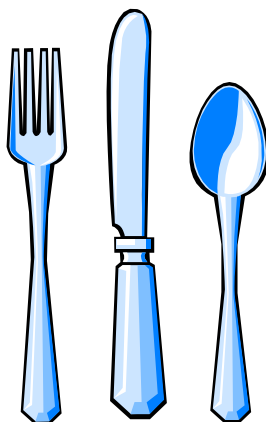
Leash

Revision idea:



Paintbrush

Revision idea:



Silverware

Revision idea:



Action Figure

Revision idea:

Revision idea:

Revision idea:

(Xerox these cards, cut them out, place in plastic baggies)

The Revision Sprint

Up to four runners will sprint through your paper's rough draft...nothing like a good 50-yard dash to get your heart racing! Your teacher will tell you what names to give the runners; write their names below them.

When you read your paper, indicate which of the four runners won the race by drawing a big, thick arrow between that runner and the finish line; then, determine where the other three runners were on the track when the race was won by drawing each of them an arrow. Decide who wins and comes in last based on the names of the runners.

When you revise your draft, you will need to make sure **your slowest racer ties your fastest racer**. Before writing next draft, talk to your teacher about how you plan to make your slowest of runners a much better racer.

Your Racers:	10 yards→20 yards→30 yards→40 yards→50 yards	Finish Line
		
		
		
		

Traipsing Through The Traits



The Revision Restaurant: Menu Worksheet

Appetizers (choose one of these palette tantalizers)

Subtle Alliteration Sorbet - Nothing prepares your palette for a perfectly-prepared main course like some subtle alliteration. Find several places in your story where small amounts subtle alliteration would enhance a description. Add words or change words. Make your descriptions delicious to your reader.

Main Courses (choose one of these delectable dishes)

Desserts (choose one of these delicious desserts to finish off your meal)

Revision Restaurant

Menu

Appetizers

Subtle Alliteration Sorbet - Nothing else prepares your palette for a perfectly prepared main course. Add or change words to make your descriptions delicious!

Sentence Variety Salad - A variety of greens, both large and small, gives one a healthy crunch! If your story needs "sparkle" try varying sentence lengths and beginnings.

Prepositional Potato Skins - An appetizer you can use during your dinner, or, during your dinner, maybe something delectable and delightful! Find places to switch your prepositional phrase to the beginning of your sentence.

Main Courses

Sirloin Snapshot - Let your fork sit still, smell the details in the beef, savor it's subtle flavor! Think of a moment in your writing you could describe in more detail.

Series of Three Tri-tip - A meal unto itself, this steak is succulent, juicy and just plain delicious! Develop your ideas by expanding your description with three details.

Slow Motion Stew - Slow cooking melds the flavors of beef and vegetables in this hearty stew. Pick a moment in your story to slow the flow of time.

Desserts

Tuxedo Cake Thoughtshots - Elegant and introspective, this is a perfect compliment to the end of a meal! If you feel stuck within your story, add a few thoughtshots to get it moving!

Explode-a-Moment Brownie Volcano - Close your eyes and imagine yourself there, wait for words to come.

Binocular Bananas Foster - You will never remember/forget a better dessert. Find a place in your story where you can zoom in-or-out.